

# trans border summer camp



All articles in this brochure were written before March 2020. Thus, still in pre-Corona times! The global crisis that is currently unfolding raises the question: how can we imagine the right to flight and migration in (post-)Corona times? In the face of states of emergency and intensified nationalist sentiments, our struggles for freedom of movement and equal rights seem to be ever more on the defensive.

At the same time, the confrontation with the virus reveals more openly than ever new fractures. The credo of neoliberal capitalism “There is no alternative” – is finally being questioned. The consequence of decades of austerity have been laid bare, and everybody can at last see: cuts to health services or the precarity of care work, are unsustainable. All around the globe, countless initiatives alongside the principle of mutual aid emerged. They create a sense of cross-over-solidarity and build structures outside or even against the framework given by neoliberal governments. Does this present us with new opportunities for emancipatory struggles?

Once and again, borders are used for selective exclusion and exploitation. One blatant example in Germany: While 200,000 tourist German passport holders were returned during last weeks from all over the world to Germany, and while in April and May around 80,000 harvest workers from Romania were flown in with charter flight to work in asparagus and strawberry fields, only 50 (!) unaccompanied minors from the EU-initiated disaster hotspots in Greece were allowed to enter Germany after a long political struggle. Further, authorities and coastguards in Italy and Malta – backed up by EU – have used the health crisis to normalise the already existing practice of non-assistance and have left many to die at sea.

No question: we have to move within the ambivalences of the new crisis, and we will continue our daily struggles. Freedom of movement is both, a practice and a vision – a practice and a vision of transnational solidarity during and beyond COVID-19.



Dear reader!

From Helsinki to Brazzaville, from Tangier to Izmir – the Transborder Summer Camp brought more than 500 activists from more than 90 cities together. An impressive composition, a series of exceptional discussions, plenaries and workshops – and many inspiring encounters and exchanges: in our evaluations we all agree, it was unforgettable and inspiring!

We once formulated the goal “to build and extend infrastructures for freedom of movement and equal rights” – and we think this is exactly what we managed to do in those six days at the ZAD near Nantes.

The initiative for the camp was started by Welcome to Europe, but many other networks got involved and mobilized and prepared for the camp. We decided, not to do an open call-out, but rather, to approach groups and initiatives, whom we knew from all our networks and through concrete projects, individually. As a result, friends, who are active on the ground, informed and invited more friends, who are also involved in their local struggles.

The atmosphere in the camp was characterized by mutual respect and an interest to learn from each other, by an eagerness to create more exchange and even better cooperation along all routes of flight and migration and in the transit and destination cities.

Of course, this brochure cannot reproduce and cover all exchanges and discussions in the camp. But it includes several texts and articles, which are exemplarily for the spectrum of topics and as well for the whole approach of this summer camp.

The message was very clear at the end of the camp: we go on, from the local to transnational level, and we will not give up fighting for our demands. Despite increasingly hard and repressive times and against the ongoing roll back of migration control, we will continue our daily struggles and structures against the border regime.

Within the last months we reflected again on the camp in several meetings and already we pre-decided: we want to come together latest again in a similar composition in summer 2022, after three years. This brochure might help to keep the idea vivid as well as the contacts. We hope, that more people, who like this kind of activism, who missed the last camp or who just started initiatives with a similar approach, can also find to us – for the daily struggles and for the next Transborder Summer Camp.

## Table of Content

Impressions of the Summer Camp	
Conclusions in a Nutshell .....	6
Comments about the Summer Camp .....	9
Report of the mission to the cross-border summer camp .....	10
Personal Impressions of the Summer Camp .....	14
For corridors of solidarity – with Alarm Phones against Borders .....	17
Welcome guides and transborder Projects and Materials .....	20
Welcome to Europe proudly presents a new Style for <a href="http://www.w2eu.info">www.w2eu.info</a> .....	27
Counselling in an empowering Way .....	29
Multilingual Magazines .....	36
“If we can’t have çay together, it’s not my revolution” Antirasim inside the movement .....	42
LGBTIQ and Women* on the Move .....	52
Black Box Deportations – Fighting the European Deportation Regime .....	55
Freedom of movement in the Balkans during the pushback era .....	60
Migrant Labour Struggles .....	63
Social Struggles in Algeria, Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia .....	72
Capitalism and Migration – why do we often fail to connect these topics into our regular explanations? .....	77
CommemorAction .....	82
Transnational Networking .....	92



## Conclusions in a Nutshell

*From Victor Nzuzi, DR Kongo*

The results of the camp were satisfactory to me.

First of all, I was able to meet different people from different countries: besides German and French people, I had the opportunity to meet British, Greek, Egyptian, Tunisian, Eritrean, Belgian and other activists. Of course also friends from Mali, Mauritanian that I already knew.

Apart from the relationships created, I was able to discover this ZADist struggle. I learned about this resistance which lasted for almost 50 years, until the disengagement of the state on this airport project. Whereas at home, the lands are confiscated by the Belgian agro-industrial companies since 1923 (case of the Belgian agro-industrial company: SOGENAC ex JVL) that

has more than 50 thousand hectare. I was able to learn from this resistance and since my return I have produced three special programs about the camp.

The third result is this success in bringing together several networks with different themes (migration, agriculture, human rights, gender, women...). A fantastic result was also: the sanitary conditions. The logistics were very, very simple, but this was efficient and well kept clean during the camp.

For the different recommendations during the debates, I suggest that those who took the notes to compile them and publish them. And also to determine the next year's activity. From these results, I have just made 3 radio shows, inspired by Nantes.

It should also be noted the great team of interpreters, who were available at all times, were also available to me.

Another comment is also that there was always a sustained attention during the debates.

These are my basic observations

The best result is also the fact of having brought together different struggles from Europe and Africa on this migration issue, different struggles and different strategies of action: for example: the squat in Greece, the disappeared at sea, the struggles to denounce the crimes of murder of migrants by the police in France with no result of justice, solidarity actions in the countries of origin: support to farmers in Congo, Mali ..., social home in Morocco, support to the associations of expelled people in Mali, support to migrants in the desert (alarmphone)... to have succeeded in bringing together all these movements that fight for the cause of free movement of migrants, or respect for the rights of migrants, all these analyses of the causes of forced migration, and debate with regards to all of this, is a big success of the camp.

But it was not possible to identify the future perspectives of the camp, or how to make use of the different recommendations.

Is there a need for more meetings, to strengthen the struggles in the countries of origin, to make real synergies between the different struggles in Europe instead of a scattered organisation amongst countries or cities?

In short: what can be done to go beyond simple speeches and meetings?

It is up to the organisers to draw out the perspectives on the basis of the recommendations and observations made during the debates.

These are my conclusions in a nutshell.

## Comments about the Summer Camp

*From Ousmane Diarra, Bamako/Mali*

As for the summer camp, it was a real pleasure for me to participate again, after the one in 2009 (in Lesbos/Greece). I was honored.

I still noticed some aspects during this camp:

- The first aspect I liked was the diversity of actors, all committed to advancing their cause;
- The organizational structure was up to the task. Care was provided to the sick. The catering was fine except that we hadn't been vegetarians.

As far as the progress of the camp's work is concerned, I was largely involved. I have participated in many workshops; I was even a panelist in some of these workshops. Many topics concerning migrants were discussed, including the problems they face during their stay or during their deportation. I even led a workshop on deportation on the theme "Support for deportees, self-organization in Mali and Togo". This workshop was held on Thursday, July 11, 2019. On Friday 12, I was among the panelists at a workshop on "Situation and Social Struggles in the Different Regions". On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>, I led a workshop on Circular Migration instead of Border Management".

The debates were rich, the contributions of all parties contributed to the understanding of the migration phenomenon and its management by the public authorities. Criticisms have been levelled at the immigration policies of the countries of the North. Personally, I have had the opportunity to present on several occasions the conditions of migrants returning involuntarily to Mali (mainly the problem of socio-economic reintegration).





## Report of the mission to the cross-border summer camp

*From Pierre Yossa, Bamako/Mali*

### INTRODUCTION

For more than 10 years now, (the Association des Refoulés d'Afrique Centrale in Mali) ARACEM has been working with all its strength to destroy all social inequalities, fight injustice, while promoting freedom and respect for human rights, which is essential for our development and growth. In this fierce struggle, friends and partners accompany us relentlessly because it is a difficult task where some unscrupulous governments also continue to make border

closures, refoulement or deportation their main activity, thus violating all laws on individual freedoms. Several human rights associations from all over the world who share the same vision as **ARACEM**, gathered around several themes for a few days in this summer camp to discuss and find together solutions to show that another world is possible.

### PROCEDURE

For almost 06 days, we met. First of all, the reception service was magnificent with this structured and orderly organization for the orientation of participants from various backgrounds. In a natural space surrounded by trees and vegetation, the framework for a conscientious debate was appropriate. All on an equal footing as a symbol of vanity, the participants understood that living together and loving one's neighbor is the most important thing on earth. From this simplicity came sharing, mutual aid, mutual respect and erased all forms of discrimination and superiority.

The activities were launched in plenary to further explain the program of activities, planning and orientation within the camp.

It was also the time to tell the participants present that the estimated 600 participants were not reached because several participants from different Sub-Saharan African countries were refused visas in the French embassies of their respective countries. These are precisely Niger, Togo, Burkina, Morocco. The various panelists took turns explaining in a few minutes to this plenary session, which was eager to learn and share experiences, the importance of participating in this or that workshop. In short, participants had to be convinced to join the workshop groups. The ARACEM representative in this exercise was noticed for having spoken about Alarm Phone Sahara, the ARACEM association and many other activities and projects carried out within ARACEM in Bamako and Gao.

In the same vein, the ARACEM representative joined several groups for exchanges and debates on specific themes within the framework of our association's activities, in particular the mass deportations of Algeria and Libya, mainly to Niger, the self-organization of refugees and migrants, the situation and social struggles in the different regions and finally the situation of women as migrants or precisely it was necessary to talk about this context of pimping and prostitution that is plaguing Europe today, obviously by explaining the phenomenon that starts from the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and even more from this experience of having had the opportunity to coordinate for 02 years a project with the help of Medico International on sex workers in Mali.

The participants were amazed and at the end of this meeting the ARACEM representative conducted several interviews to give ample information on the current security situation in Mali and in the sub-region, on the situation of migrants in the West African sub-region and finally on the care of these migrants once they were forced to return to Mali.

### HOSTING CONDITION

... The meal was vegetarian and at the same time a big congratulations to the teams who cooked all this time. In short, all the participants were committed and aware of our task: "To save the world".

### OUTLOOK

At the end of this very important meeting, I sincerely believe that more is needed to find and propose appropriate solutions to cure our planet of all these evils.



To do this, I propose that there be:

- Similar meetings in a country of the West African sub-region, or the Maghreb or the Central African sub-region, so that not only will there be more participants, but also and above all so that our friends from the rest of the world can touch African realities with their fingers.
- That local elected officials are often invited to understand exactly what we are experiencing and what we think for the improvement of people's living conditions or for the development of our localities.
- That diplomatic leaders participate for a more mobile and secure world while respecting human rights through the easy issuance of visas for participants.
- That many migrants be invited to share their experiences in workshops specific to them.
- That a synergy of action be simultaneous to share and exchange our daily experiences and experiences after the meetings to keep the links and propose immediate solutions for the management of critical cases and coordinate demonstrations to denounce human rights violations.

### CONCLUSION:

Living such an experience is unique and essential. The cross-border summer camp is an area of freedom and sharing. I have just returned from this happy and proud meeting to contribute to the improvement and change of living conditions in the world. Proud to have been presented from beginning to end until the last day, proud to have validly represented ARACEM. ARACEM's vision is shared by thousands of associations and networks around the world and it is a hope that leads us to believe that we are on the right track and that another world is possible.

## Personal Impressions of the Summer Camp

*From Amadou Mbow, Nouakchott/Mauretania*

Our participation in the transborder summer camp transshipment from 9 July 2019 to 14 July 2019 gave me the following impressions:

- In principle: this organization fits perfectly with the founding principles of social struggles around the world. The camp provided an opportunity for participants, the majority of whom share the militant commitment to a more just world that respects human rights, to come together and share their practices, successes, failures and strategies on struggles.
- On the organizational level: I appreciated the spontaneity of the activists and their commitment to good organization. However, I understand the imperfections related to the nature of the event.
- On scientific content: several themes were included and I find all of them important and interdependent.

The plenary sessions took up a lot of space. I would have preferred that the workshops, which constitute spaces for dialogue and exchange, take up more space and time. The debates were shortened due to lack of time, which is one of the limits of the camps.

- Africa was under-represented because of visa denials. This raises questions about the importance of the themes. Shouldn't we focus on the issue of freedom of movement and the visa regime?
- How to use the results (conclusions) that come out of these types of meetings?
- Which advocacy and for which target in Africa and Europe?

My impressions are divided between the satisfaction of meeting very militant people and young Africans who are involved and living in Africa on the one hand and on the other hand the lack or absence of substantive debates on how we should work in synergy here and there?



I know that everything is a priority for the disappeared at sea and/or in the desert; the almost widespread violations of the rights of people in migration, the trivialization of the death of people in migration by almost all the authorities of our countries.

The democratic deficit, debt, the militarization of the West African sub-region, wars and their consequences on human rights and especially inter-community conflicts, not to mention the repression that have other consequences on the migrant's entire life.





## For corridors of solidarity – with Alarm Phones against Borders

*From Alarm Phone Team Hanau/Germany*

More than 500 activists from across Europe, North, West, and Central Africa gathered in July 2019 at the Transborder Summer Camp near Nantes in France. The network Welcome to Europe had initiated the five-day long meeting and invited all working groups and projects along the different routes of flight and migration. The Alarm Phone alone sent delegates from over 20 cities.

The camp started with a “Noborder-Fair”, where the different groups and networks came into exchange on various information tables: Activists from the Balkan route met members of Afrique Europe Interact, Top Manta friends from Barcelona shared their experiences with activists from Izmir or Helsinki, “border crossers” from southern France exchanged experiences with We’ll Come United. Already on this first day a great atmosphere of mutual empowerment developed, which shaped the spirit for the three following days in the workshops, assemblies and in the evenings, accompanied by music, theatre and dance.

Many discussions focused on practical experiences and questions concerning the establishment and expansion of the infrastructure supporting freedom of movement and equal rights for all. It was no coincidence that “Corridors of Solidarity” ranked high in the program. The well-attended workshop on this topic divided into three subgroups: one for the production of multilingual and cross-border information material as well as printed guides and online guides in transit and destination countries; a second on shelters and support spaces such as rest houses, (occupied) social centers or counselling cafes; and a third on various hotline and alarm phone projects along flight- and migration- routes.

The following is a brief summary of the latter workshop, in which, in addition to the WatchTheMed (WTM) Alarm Phone, four other hotline projects participated: the Alarme Phone Sahara, which is currently under construction, a hotline against push backs in Slovenia, a telephone project on the Alpine border between Italy and France and an emergency telephone against deportations in Frankfurt. Although the contextual frameworks and requirements are very different for all five projects, there were also interesting similarities when discussing the different problems they face.



Protest for Safe Passages in Frankfurt/Germany in August 2019

How do the respective situations change and how can we remain flexible? With whom on the state or institutional side can or must we cooperate? How do we disseminate our telephone number? How do we organize our shifts? How do we deal with language barriers and translations? And last but not least: what can we do against increasing criminalisation?

We all know that state repression follows political and media hypes and, if necessary, they construct completely arbitrary so-called criminal offences. It is theoretically possible for every project that supports refugees or migrants in transit to face accusations of aiding and abetting “illegal entry or residence”. Hence, we are all potential “solidarity criminals”. Accordingly, the question arises everywhere as to how publicly and offensively we present our networks and what should remain invisible particularly for the benefit of those affected.

The WTM Alarm Phone had the most continuous history in the discussion group and is active with many groups and teams in many cities. The transnational and deliberately decentralised structure should make it harder for persecuting authorities to paralyse this hotline project overnight. The WTM Alarm Phone chooses the “Hydra” as an organisational model as a preventive anti-criminalisation strategy: if one head is cut off, two others should grow

back. In any case, efforts are being made to create a network structure in which groups can replace each other in their functions, if one or another becomes weakened.

In the middle of the final plenary session in the big tent of the Transborder Summer Camp, a fearless mole emerged from the ground and created a little hill right next to the presenter. Some of the amused participants viewed the animal as a potential secret service infiltrator. But also an alternative analogy was drawn – nicer and somewhat obvious after the many successful discussions of the previous days: the mole as a symbol and inspiration to continue to work on the daily construction and extension of the “Underground Rail Road”<sup>\*</sup> for and with flight and migration movements. The transnational meeting in Nantes was thrilling for so many participants because of the strong mutual inspiration and empowerment experienced, mainly on a practical level. It will definitively live on as a highlight in the history of more than 20 years of Noborder-Camps.

<sup>\*</sup> The Underground Railroad was an informal network of opponents to slavery that provided support to slaves fleeing the southern states of the US to the safer north. Through secret routes, houses, flight helpers and secret communications it was possible to free about 100,000 slaves between 1810 and 1850.

## Welcome guides and transborder projects and materials

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last years, numerous info projects and guides have been developed, covering both individual countries (such as the Welcome to Europe ones concerning Greece, Italy and Spain) and some border areas (such as the one between Italy and France).

These projects – which were born and developed as a reaction and response to the increasingly violent and aggressive policies by Europe and by single countries towards migrants arriving and transiting within Europe – have been made possible thanks to the constant and incisive presence in



the various territories of many realities (informal groups, associations, individual activists, etc.) which for years have been carrying out solidarity actions and support activities addressed to migrants in arrival/transit/departure and have been fighting against Fortress Europe and the various forms of racism and discrimination.

The realization of projects aimed at the production and dissemination of information materials, beyond the peculiarities of each project and reality that carries them out, has as common features the achievement of two main objectives: the first – more immediate and “visible” – is precisely to provide through various communication tools (paper materials, websites, audio files, etc...) independent, complete and updated information to migrants travelling in order to help them in their journey and in their choices always starting from the freedom of movement and from the principle of self-determination of every human being as milestones; the second – more indirect and less evident – is the one concerning the opportunity to create or strengthen networks and cooperation work between different anti-racist and solidarity groups and associations at national and transnational level by developing an extremely important process of sharing information, updates, social and political practices and initiatives.

### EXAMPLES OF CURRENT AND PAST EXPERIENCES

- Welcome to Europe website (w2eu.info)
- Transborder info leaflet on Italian-French border (Welcome to Europe network, Carovane Migranti, Progetto 20K)
- Info leaflet about the Swiss-Italian border (2016) and cooperation between Swiss and Italian activists on Dublin cases (Welcome to Europe network and other groups)
- Italian-Greek network on the “Adriatic route” (Italian and Greek groups and associations)
- “Antenne Migranti” project about Italian-Austrian border (different Italian groups in cooperation with some Austrian associations)

## LEADING QUESTIONS

**?** *How can we strengthen the networks among activists and groups active inside a country and along the border areas?*

As written in the introduction, the production of information materials is extremely important not only in its objective (to produce and update information) but also in its process since it makes possible the creation or strengthening of networks at national and transnational level. In some cases these projects are born thanks to the presence of such networks while in other cases networks and collaborations between different realities are born thanks to this kind of projects.

**?** *What are the main common challenges and issues?*

Depending on the typology of info materials, some of the topics and key points may change, although usually all these projects share some basic aspects. Among these are: the independence of the information; the link with “reality” (e.g. the list not only of theoretical human rights but also of those that are really guaranteed or violated); the collection of many contacts “from below” (local groups and associations, social centres and spaces, etc.) which share not only the fact of supporting migrants but, more generally, a very precise way of seeing the world based on freedom of movement and anti-racism; the will not to be “impositive” and ethnocentric towards migrants who use the information materials and therefore to try to help and “accompany” the life and travel paths that must be chosen by the migrants themselves.

Concerning the work among different groups and realities, there may be some difficulties related to practical, linguistic and cultural issues (e.g. different conceptions and visions from one country to another with respect to priorities and to timing and deadlines, language difficulties, expectations not always coinciding between one person and another or between one group and another). There are no “magic formulas” able to solve everything, but it certainly helps the possibility of meeting periodically (in person and/or online) to clarify from the beginning the availability and expectations of each person and the common work issues and frameworks.

**?** *How can we manage and balance the different levels of support and communication (“formal” and “informal” contacts and places, what can or can’t be written/said, etc.)? Which information can be published? How to share sensible/sensitive info?*

In an era of increasing criminalisation not only of migrants but also of those who are in solidarity with them, it is necessary to find the right balance between the importance of providing information and the need not to put at risk either migrants on the move or those who offer them support. In this perspective each information project, while maintaining the main principles and milestones, is carried out paying attention both to how the information are written and to how and which information and contacts can be put inside the info materials (e.g. respecting the choice of some local realities not to be indicated among the contacts because of the high risk of criminalization). These aspects obviously present some complexities and difficulties and for this reason it is always important to build a solid relationship of trust and collaboration between all the subjects involved. In addition, it is of great importance to have the help of lawyers who can in some cases provide information and suggestions on which information to insert and how to insert it in the most effective and “safe” way.

**?** *How can we continue and improve the flow of information? How to adapt and update information?*

The starting point for the constant and precise updating of information is certainly linked to the presence of groups and activists in the various territories. The issue concerning the updating of information is of extreme importance and is linked to the central issue concerning the attempts to find a compromise between the need to provide information as up-to-date as possible and the practical difficulties related to the timing and overload of activists and groups following these projects. In several cases, the time needed to update the information materials may lengthen due to the overload of the activists involved and the “structural” time required for the various phases of the work (collection, verification and selection of information, drafting and updating of the texts, translations, layouts, prints, distributions). In a certain sense, delays and unforeseen events are to be considered as “implicite” factors given the complexity of the projects and the completely voluntary nature of those who carry them out, but surely the individual working groups can understand how to try to reduce these difficulties as much as possible (for example by clearly identifying the contact persons/coordinators, organizing periodically videoconferences and meetings in person, clearly defining the deadlines, finding an agreement on which need is priority in a given place and time between having as many updates as possible and having the materials ready as soon as possible for distribution). Obviously the question of which and how much information to update changes if we are dealing with projects related

to border areas where “urgent” and “geographically localized” information is the prevailing one and where there is a greater need to produce synthetic and periodically updated materials.

**?** *How to make info accessible (language, icons, web, audio guides/video download, etc.)? Exploring new ways of communication/information sharing?*

In the implementation of the various projects there is much discussion about which communication channels to develop/maintain/add when producing information materials for migrants. Usually the most common tools are the websites and the print out of the various guides, but there are other ways that are just as effective and complementary to them like facebook pages, apps, audio files and sheets made of icons). The fact that many migrants use mobile phones as a communication and information tool during their journey makes it necessary to think more and more about the production of multimedia materials that can be used directly from the mobiles. In addition, some migrants are partially or totally illiterate and therefore they would find it easier to use audio files and/or materials printed with icons and images. At the same time, printed copies allow to have a “physical” tool always available. Generally speaking, the best solution would be to disseminate the information materials through various methods, if possible providing the possibility of both a paper print and a multimedia diffusion through websites, apps and/or audio files to download. As well as the work of updating information, here too there are some practical and economic difficulties and the overload of many activists, but some “pilot projects” may be very useful in this sense.

**?** *If and how can some “pilot projects” be reproduced in other areas and contexts (national welcome guides, e.g. Italian- French border info leaflet, Antenne Migranti network, etc...)?*

Regarding the projects and in particular the pilot projects that propose new and original methods and practices, it is certainly very important to have opportunities to present them and assess their replicability and adaptability to other geographical areas and other contexts (in this sense the Transborder Summer Camp in Nantes was very useful and productive for the knowledge and the sharing of initiatives and projects carried out by different groups and networks).

Taking up some of the examples mentioned above, experiences such as national welcome guides, the Italian-French border info leaflet and the exchange of information and support between Italian and Swiss activists can

also be replicated in other countries/regions and along other borders (and in some areas this already happens) since in the different countries and border areas, despite the peculiarities of each area and country, the main issues and problems often present similar elements and situations and therefore there are also similarities with regard to some of the content to be included in the info materials (e.g. the detention and reception systems, the criminalization of migrants and supporters, the ways in which migrants are rejected according to Dublin Regulation, police violence along the borders, the risks of crossing borders, etc.). Although with their respective peculiarities, the project “Antenne Migranti” (recently concluded) and the network on the “Adriatic Route” Greece-Italy are experiences that have allowed to create – both between the Italian cities/regions and in relations with the activists of Austria and Greece – a relationship of constant collaboration that has made it possible to improve and make more constant and effective the work of monitoring migration routes, direct support to migrants and exchange information and updates on the situation along the respective routes and cities.

Further examples, in addition to those mentioned above, are the “QX1-Welcome Map” project of the Transbordeur Collective in Marseille (which will also be carried out in two Italian cities) a project focused on the production and dissemination of easily accessible information through the use of mobile phones (website and app).

## PROPOSALS AND REMARKS

Working on info materials and guides requires periodical updates and in this process a central role is played by the people on the move who share information and experiences and by a constant work of cooperation among activists and groups. Collecting and spreading info materials increases the opportunities for networking among activists inside and outside each national borders and the chances to build political networks and to strengthen the sharing of information and practices;

**➤** The increasing of the number of info projects and materials and the crucial role of internet and social networks make the use of multiple media increasingly necessary (websites, paper, apps, audiofiles, QR codes). At the same time, we know that different kinds of media fit to different publics (social workers, migrants) so the best way could be the production and the dissemination of information through different media. On this issue some proposals are: create hotlines with automatically answers

(audio-guides) with language choice; publish complementary brochure/leaflet to update main brochures; produce welcome maps for cities and regions; find alternative communication ways to share urgent info (alerts on borders).

## CRITICAL POINTS

Confusion about info and info overload: in some cases it is not so clear which and how much information to include in the info materials and to find a good compromise between the need to put as many information as possible and the need to produce easy-to-read and clear materials;

- ▶ A frequent problem concerns the overloading of activists as most of them are often involved in other activities and projects. This can cause delays and troubles during the work on each project and it is somehow related with the “overambitious” attitude and the need to be aware of our limits without giving up what we do and what we struggle for.
- ▶ Problems collaborating between groups with different approaches and availabilities: when working on transnational projects and initiatives one of the most common issues concerns the different personal situations, approaches and ways to work that could create some problems for the whole work or just during one or more steps and phases. Personal situations (job, family, etc.), “cultural” topics (use of some specific words/sentences, aptitude towards team working, concept of time and deadlines, organisational aspects, etc.) as well as “political” issues (e.g. if and how to collaborate with other groups or with institutional actors) can create some difficulty and misunderstanding especially in long-term projects or in periods of very intense and stressful work but, based on our experiences, this sort of problems has always been overcome thanks to the big commitment of everyone and the great sharing of main objectives.

## Welcome to Europe proudly presents a new Style for [www.w2eu.info](http://www.w2eu.info)

### RE-LAUNCH OF THE MULTILINGUAL WEBGUIDE – SINCE 10 YEARS AS DAILY SUPPORT FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Every day in average up to 1000 persons click on the information pages of [www.w2eu.info](http://www.w2eu.info). In several refugee- and migrant-communities the online guide is known as trustful source for contacts and first information.

The transnational project was born in the struggles against the border regime and since 10 years it developed to a real infrastructure for freedom of movement and for equal rights. We are happy to present our guide now with many updates in many cities and countries and in a brand new design.

Since it was developed in 2010 the webguide provides in its minimum contacts in nearly all European countries of arrival and of transit and also in various transit-countries around the Mediterranean. Many country sections are fed with various chapters about the factual rights and situations in each place. The information is given in four languages: Arabic, English, Farsi and French. Ever since, the webguide has developed as a tool that is used a lot by migrant/refugee communities all along the different routes and in different points of their escape: Before the departure, if people are stuck in transit and upon arrival, by those who face problems and deportation threats. Information against the fear and for the right to stay for everyone is the attempt to do counselling in an empowering way combined with the information the webguide publishes. [w2eu.info](http://w2eu.info) became also a tool for networking and is used a lot not only by people on the journey but also by activists to get in touch and find help in case it is needed.

The network Welcome to Europe consists of close contacts and friendships. It has remained an activist and grassroots network since ten years. Out of our experiences open borders are the only option to stop the suffering we have often enough witnessed at all borders. No one is illegal.



All of us work on a voluntary basis – but no one would describe themselves as “volunteers”. We are activists, we are fighters for freedom and for equal rights for everyone.

In July 2019 Welcome to Europe initiated the transborder summer camp. Together with other networks we succeeded to organize four days of practical exchange and mutual empowerment. More than 500 activists from all over Europe and from many countries in Africa – with and without own experiences as refugees or migrants – joined and contributed to this great space. It’s exactly this atmosphere of solidarity, of respect and persistent practical struggles, which Welcome to Europe will try to foster and promote also in the future. In this reference the new web guide is another promise for continuity.

The webguide with a new face:

<https://w2eu.info/>

Brochure about 10 Years Welcome to Europe:

<http://infomobile.w2eu.net/files/2019/07/w2eu-10years-booklet-EN-201906-screen.pdf>

### HOW TO WORK WITH TRAUMA WITHOUT (RE-)TRAUMATIZING

There is an enormous need for advice during escape, on migration routes, in transit and also at the points of arrival. There are many questions: where can help be found at this moment; what are the possibilities to continue the journey; how can we arrive safely and finally fight successfully for a right to stay? At the same time, the people asking these questions have often had several traumatising experiences, which they carry on their shoulders.

Our networks try to provide accurate and accessible information and advice to people on the move. At the same time, these conversations are often also a moment of exchange. It is frequently necessary to talk about incidents where words are missing and there is a risk of wounds reopening.

At the Transborder Summercamp in France we met in a big group and created a workshop that was not a prepared lecture. We wanted to exchange experiences on how counselling can work without (re-)traumatisation and how we can use counselling as a self-empowering, empowering instrument. As some of the participants, we now tried in this text to summarize practical suggestions and reflections that have remained in our memories. We hope to make them accessible, without claiming to be exhaustive, to expand the possibilities for action and to whet the appetite for more.

There are many people who are able to process traumatic experiences because of their resilience without developing permanent symptoms. Having experienced something bad does not automatically mean that they need support. We often read the figure that two thirds of people manage to cope with the violence they have experienced. This means they do not develop long term symptoms, even though it does not exclude the possibility that symptoms appear in the first 4 to 6 weeks after the experience. Symptoms are forms or attempts of coping, always along the lines of what a person is currently capable of.

Most support is given by people on their way to each other among themselves. Except for experiences of violence that are taboo, which are not so easy to talk about because of fear how others react or because of feelings of shame. Sexualised violence is often such a taboo. However, there are also examples, such as the women’s self-defence villages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Rwanda or other self-help structures, where this



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topic is not taboo. Often, only talking about the experience is taboo, not the fact that it happened itself. When I am sure of my own point of view, I can also name difficult issues that I have discussed with others in order to build a bridge.

Perhaps 2% of those affected receive professional help, the majority of support is provided by their personal environment.

Activists/counsellors should always explain exactly who they are and from which perspective they make their offer (with which professional background, from which group and with which possibilities do they offer counselling, their own political motivation to fight for equal rights etc.), what they can offer, what they clearly cannot, and explain all kinds of other things as a framework, e.g. how much time I have now, the next day, next week. It's worth doing this in peace and quiet and to say seemingly self-evident things several times, not only to say your own name and contact, but also to write it down or hand it out as a card etc. The certainty of the counsellor about what they are able to do also gives confidence and creates a more horizontal and honest level of conversation. At the end ask: if you know all this now, are you ready to talk to me and I will see what I can do for you? I would be happy if you are!

Not surprisingly, it is not the great methods that help, but rather a certain attitude of the person doing the counselling, which can convey hope as well as security. Hope that things can get better again, that healing and “arriving” is possible. In our opinion, the most important thing is that the person concerned feels welcome by the counsellor. For us “Welcome to Europe” has several meanings. It is about individually expressing one’s joy that a person has made it this far, that I say this as a representative of European civil society. And that I see it as my wish or even my obligation to stand by the person, that I find it shameful and scandalous when he or she experiences discrimination and lack of rights, and that we have to see if we can work together despite what makes us different.

This attitude of friendly welcoming should refer to everything that the person concerned brings with them, i.e. their strength and joie de vivre, their experiences and knowledge, but also their grief, powerlessness and helplessness, and also their anger, uncontrolled rage and all kinds of other, perhaps not necessarily sympathetic, coping mechanism that they do (self-medication with alcohol or illegalised drugs) or that come over them (outbursts of anger, panic attacks, not being able to stop crying etc.). It is also important to put the experience of the person into context and to make it clear that many other people have also experienced this injustice and that there was clearly one or more violation of their rights, i.e. that it is others who have acted “illegally” and not them who have sought clandestine ways of seeking security.

The counsellors should of course also keep their own feelings in mind. Good counselling is not conceivable without at the same time consulting with others about what I am experiencing. When it comes to violations of personal boundaries, it happens quickly that supporters also go beyond their limits or notice their own limits too late. Without rooms for reflection with other counsellors, this is not the exception but the rule.

An important question is how much can and may be asked. In general, do not open locked boxes with injuries if you cannot handle them. It is perfectly okay to tell people in counselling settings, that they should report details only to a specially trained person, unless it is absolutely necessary to talk about something difficult for approaching an important situation. Such a case would be given if the person is about to be interviewed for asylum and the general security (right to stay and therefore access to protection and in the second step therapy) depends on it.

Then it is difficult to avoid bringing up traumatic topics. If we do bring them up, it is important to leave the choice of what is disclosed and what is not. “In the asylum interview itself it becomes important if you, as bad as it feels, could tell the bad experiences completely. It is your weapon; it is your



story and you fight for your right to stay. Now here you don't have to tell me everything, if it is too difficult for you – if you want to practice telling it, then do it, I am ready to listen.”

Curiosity is a bad companion at this point, but openness is more than important. It can be very important to be able to simply listen and bear together. It is often difficult for those affected to imagine that others can bear to hear something that they themselves may not think about. It can also be good to know when is the right time for this and when is the time to end a story. It is not important to know the life story of my counterpart in detail. If I notice that the person is reliving the story while telling it, then it is important to interrupt and to have enough time and to make offers that bring the person back to the here and now and to stay together for a while.

In our experience, difficult stories, if there is a real need to talk about them, can be addressed more easily with the appropriate attitude and security of the counsellors, if it is made clear that this is a technical part of the asylum preparation and an atmosphere of systematic or even technical questions and answers is created. It is important to sensitively observe how the person is doing when telling the story and to stop in difficult moments and not to keep on pushing to continue. Sentences like: “I would like to ask you if you have ever experienced torture, because I got such an impression from your previous stories. You don't have to tell me the details, but it is very relevant for your interview and there (at the interview) you should tell as much detail as possible so that your chances of getting a secure status increase.” In this way, a difficult topic is addressed and opened, but at the same time it is limited and closed again. The person can then decide for themselves whether they want to report more about it or not. So it is always important to explain why a difficult information is so important to ask or to discuss and the appropriateness for the asylum procedure, i.e. the process of obtaining a safe status, and thus the best possible attempt to get protection, so that one does not have to return to that place where a terrible thing happened. Often in our experience, the usefulness of telling about trauma, and the telling itself, can help people to express it for the first time and can therefore also lead to relief.

In difficult situations, small gestures count: open the window, give a glass of water, talk about what helps others (going for a walk, playing football, being with friends, eating something sweet or sour, having a coffee, taking a shower, listening to music, etc).

Exercises and methods that you don't know and also those that you don't like yourself should not be taught to others. What can help is very individual. Offers can also be rejected and this must be clear. The best thing is, a person can choose between several ways and decide for themselves what they feel

is best for them. From a psychiatric outpatient clinic it is said that a doctor wanted to make “the Inner Safe Place” method with a young refugee, but he thought that was stupid. She replied, “If you don't cooperate here, you can leave, I can't help you.” This often happens when supporters want to try something, they think is good for themselves, and the people concerned are not attracted and they evaluate this as “you are not getting involved”.

A possible technique in an asylum preparation, which avoids having to tell traumatic experiences, would be to explain the asylum system and the procedure to the person to be counselled (procedure, situation as well as the general questions) and also to name categories of “important” asylum-relevant topics in general, so that the person can recognize what is important to say in the interview without talking about it.

It is also important to tell the person that the traumatising itself, the psychological state they may be in, is also relevant to asylum and that symptoms, medically/psychologically diagnosed illnesses, should be mentioned at the beginning of the interview so that there is at least a chance that their narrative is better understood and that the possible avoidance of bad memories, or the lack of possibility to remember, can be sorted out by the listeners.

In preparation for the asylum interview or court hearing, also talk about what happens afterwards. “I know this is going to be a really tough day for you, what can you do after that?” And to remember which are the methods to be anchored again in the here and now and prepare (for example, to plan who will go with you, who will wait outside or who can be called).

Images or metaphors can be helpful in conveying hope, for example: “Your life is not over because of sexualised violence. If you were a tree, a branch would have been cut off now. But the stump will heal, and when you get everything you need, many new branches will grow.” Or: “you know, a dunghill stinks, it's almost unbearable to stand next to such a pile of shit. And yet sometimes the biggest pumpkins of all grow on that dung heap.”

Bad experiences are often much more powerful than the good ones and can repress them. Just as one drop of crude oil can poison a whole barrel of drinking water, a bad experience can cover up many good aspects of life. That is why it is important to research the good things together with others, so that the brain (thinking) does not only deal with the bad things that are so intrusive (thought carousel). For example, there is the exercise with the 3 stones in the pocket. For every good thing, no matter how small, I change one stone into the other pocket and then on and on.

This also applies to our own attitude: If we cannot see the small steps forward and cannot share the success stories of other survivors, then in the harsh reality of the struggles to move on, to arrive and to stay, it is very difficult

to spread hope. It is important that we always keep our eyes on the successes, that we always make them great and appreciate them.

In the “Journeys back to the border”, those who returned were bearers of hope in this sense. With their presence alone, they convey that it is possible not only to survive, but also to grow with the experiences made while fleeing. This is not only true in the “Journeys Back”, it can work everywhere. By counselling in mixed teams including people with and without a migrant background, we show in a very practical way that it is possible to work together on an equal level, even with very different starting conditions.

Migrants are usually survival artists. This also has to be said and what has been achieved so far needs to be emphasized. Sentences like: “You have already made it this far, many others unfortunately have not,” help to recognize your own strength.

It is ideal to make consultations safe by choosing the place and setting of the consultation. If possible, privacy should be created and a stress-free situation. This is not always possible when people are found under very difficult conditions, such as homeless in transit, e.g. in Patras (Greece). If privacy cannot be created, it is better to discuss the other way round, in group consultations people’s rights are explained in general and procedures are explained. It is often the decision of individuals to tell their personal stories in such situations. Nevertheless, people should be made aware that this is not an ideal setting and, if possible, alternatives should be offered, such as telephone counselling at a later stage or contact with counsellors in the planned arrival locations.

Anyone who has experienced massive violence can also be considered a survivor, because many of them do not manage to surrender. The English term “survivor” is useful in this sense. Many also like to hear it when the fact how far they made it gets special appreciation: “Obviously you are a very strong person, even if you feel weak sometimes/right now”. When people say that they would never have made it without help, it is worth listing exactly who helped them and how, because gratitude is one of the most stabilizing feelings of all, along with being loved.

Counsellors can strengthen the self-healing powers of those affected even more by working with people to systematically collect everything they are good at, what they like to do, what could help and what has helped them before. If the counsellor knows about other people, she can also actively contribute things that have already helped others and offer them.

In support and counselling, as well as in joint actions, the family context should also be taken into account: What role does the person we are dealing with have in their family? Who does know what about whom, or perhaps



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should not know? Family is of some importance to most people. It can be a source of support but also a burden. Both can have an influence on those affected. Therefore, it is often helpful to address this topic with sufficient caution, but also openly, and: there are few areas where cultural imprinting is as powerful as within the family. It is important for us as counsellors to look beyond our own ideas and experiences and to try to understand how the other person’s family works.

In many cases it can be helpful to see that I am not alone. In anti-deportation struggles we have had good experience with group counselling sessions in which several people affected train together how to prevent deportations and also exchange their own strategies. Experiencing and passing on solidarity belongs in the same category as the feeling of being loved or the feeling of gratitude: it stabilizes immensely. That is why our activist consultations often end with the offer to help and to get active towards the counselled person, maybe in the future, when they feel better and are sure they want to become active themselves.

*For the right to stay and freedom of movement!*

## TSC “Multilingual magazines” workshop:

BRIEF REPORT, SOME THOUGHTS, AND SOME PROPOSALS

*clandestina, January 2020, Thessaloniki*

During the “Multilingual magazines” workshop at the TSC, we had the opportunity to look through the pages (besides the numerous leaflets, posters, and the rest of the material circulating in the TSC area) of publications like “**Journal des Jungles**”/Dunkerque, published since 2013 in French/English/Arabic

[www.psmigrants.org/site/la-psm-en-actions/le-journal-des-jungles/](http://www.psmigrants.org/site/la-psm-en-actions/le-journal-des-jungles/),

“**Die Stimme Magazin – The voice of refugee and migrant women\***”

Berlin, published since 2017 in English/French/German/Farsi,

“**enough! – refugees newspaper**” Zurich, published since 2016 in English and Arabic (e-mail: [enough@immerda.ch](mailto:enough@immerda.ch)),

“**visAvis – [multilingual] magazine on asylum and migration**”, published in Denmark since 2009 [www.visavis.dk](http://www.visavis.dk)

“**Mur-Mures aux frontières**”, wall newspaper published in Grenoble (in French, see 2019 issues),

“**CANDY**” – 2nd brochure from Can’t Evict Solidarity anti-repression campaign (in English and German),

“**Papierlose Zeitung**” published by the Autonomous School Zurich (ASZ) in German and

“**Bulletin**” Thessaloniki, published since 2018 in English/French/Arabic/Farsi/Albanian [www.facebook.com/Bulletinmag](http://www.facebook.com/Bulletinmag).

We also flicked through the pages of **Artwork brochures** by members of “Lesvos LGBTIQ+ Refugee Solidarity” (June 2019), and info-leaflets by “**Alarm Phone Sahara**”, by **Afrique-Europe-Interact**, by **QX1** (Information sharing platform for migrants arriving in Marseille in English/French/Arabic – <http://qx1.org/>), by the “**Association des Réfugié.es et Communautés Migrantes au Maroc**” (ARCOM, Rabat, about the shelter for women on the run ARCOM has created), etc.

To our knowledge, there are at least two more publications similar to the ones mentioned: **Daily Resistance**, published since 2016 in many languages in Berlin [www.facebook.com/DailyResistanceNewspaper/](http://www.facebook.com/DailyResistanceNewspaper/), and “**Fiasco**



– **critical intervention against migration regimes**”, published since 2017 in various (european) languages in Basel [www.fiasko-magazin.ch](http://www.fiasko-magazin.ch). For sure, there are more similar publications produced in a self-organised way, and it would be great for all these efforts to get in contact with each other. A very important publication is the **Afrique-europe-Interact newspaper**, that appears (only in German) as a supplement to the daily newspaper taz.

During the workshop at the TSC people from different groups discussed the necessity to have magazines produced **by and for migrants and locals**, magazines that go beyond (the greatly needed of course) practical information for survival, we discussed the pros and cons of printed material in relation to social media. The importance of the fact that **with multilingual magazines people can read texts (analyses, news, poetry) in their own languages** as a factor of empowerment was also stressed, as well as the importance of the **diversity created by the different languages and the different aesthetic approaches**. We shared thoughts on the obstacles that migrants who want to participate are faced with, and we also discussed about **difficulties in production, funding and distribution**. The idea of creating a **transnational**

**network of translators** was brought up. Finally, there was a practical presentation/workshop on how to actually produce a hand-made zine.

Below are **some thoughts and proposals that were born not only out of the specific TSC workshop, but also owe to the whole experience of the TSC, and, more generally, to our exchanges of opinions and experience on producing/distributing multilingual material** within and across borders.

### PRINTED MAGAZINE VS SOCIAL MEDIA

A printed magazine is something material, that can help establish personal contact with its readers. It can contain larger texts. Its distribution can become a public event, when it happens in city streets where migrants hang out, and even more when it happens in “migrants’ (State-run) camps”. On the other hand, it is difficult to achieve regularity and frequency of publication.

Social media, on the other hand, can achieve the fast spreading of news, calls and information, but they are impersonal, can reproduce false info for migrants or end up **encouraging the passive consumption of sad news by locals**. Social media can also provide **unwanted info to police authorities**.

A solution could be to **combine the printed magazine with a web-based journal**. The movement’s computer experts could help create a platform where migrants could participate via internet with their identity protected. A web-based journal could include Internet radio and audio and video files. It might seem of little importance to people living in societies flooded with mass and social media, but such platforms could make a real difference to migrants condemned to spend daily hours and hours of devastating, dead time of inactivity and waiting in “refugee camps”.

### MULTILINGUAL MAGAZINES AS TOOLS OF EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNICATION

A magazine works differently for migrants who are under conditions of arrival, transit, or less precarious residency. Infrastructures like WatchTheMed Alarm Phone and Alarm Phone Sahara are desperately needed, as they provide critical communication/documentation, while tools like the “Welcome Guides” from w2eu-infomobile aim to provide info material to people on the move.

After that, migrants who managed to settle, need to move on to a life beyond mere survival. Multilingual magazines can help in this, by opening new

fields of interest, giving migrants the opportunity to express themselves, participate in socio-political life, **speak about their lives and the countries they came from**, share ideas with other migrants and locals. The circulation of magazines with texts in migrants’ languages can facilitate their participation in the social sphere. Networking magazines circulating in different countries can enrich their content and broaden their perspectives.

### OBSTACLES TO MIGRANTS’ PARTICIPATION

It is obvious that migrants who are on the move are not interested at all in producing magazines and migrants who are in a completely precarious position do not want to be exposed to more dangers which is what they feel their participation in the production of a magazine would entail. Migrants who are somehow more settled, usually depend on NGOs and they don’t want to risk losing whatever they get from them. Other migrants work under devastating conditions (12 hours in the fields and trying to marginally survive or working as street vendors and trying constantly to escape the law), and these are not the best preconditions for writing texts. Also, people who have experienced trauma (and migrants often belong in more than one ways in this category) do not want to go back to it or relate to situations that recall it. So migrants who have somehow moved on, living under better conditions, are hesitant to relate to initiatives connected with situations they hope they have left behind them. Second generation migrants have given strong personal battles (at school, in the neighbourhoods, in their jobs) trying to be (and be treated) “just like everybody else”.

On the other hand, locals who participate in publishing initiatives, tend to oversimplify language barriers, reproduce stereotypes and tend to set their own agenda, according to their needs and experiences (for example, talking about antifascism and anti-racism or the need to fight against state obstacles in borders crossing as if there were no exploitation by the capitalist centers of the planetary periphery outside the walls of Fortress Europe).

Locals have to listen to migrants and form the magazine’s assembly in a way that breaks the barriers of language, and especially in a way that limits or alleviates the locals’ privilege even in the area of verbal communication over other members of the assembly.

This of course is not a theoretical problem. It is a problem of time and involvement in actual social relations that a common project like a printed mag or a website or a film can encourage: Locals should not be afraid of criticism that they are offering “charity”, when what they are actually doing is

patiently building communication through a shared endeavor. And even this whole issue of what solidarity is (what is its relation to “charity” and what it means to “help”) can only really be discussed among locals and migrants, not in separate “cultural monologues”.

It is obviously a difficult task to have a common assembly that will get rid of all privileges and sometimes it is easier to find common grounds between migrants who live in different EU countries under similar conditions, or between older and newer generations of migrants, coming from different countries (although there are always cases of some members of the older generations of immigrants, who have achieved “social inclusion” in [greek] society, who tend to be arrogant towards newcomers). It is important **to help transnational networking of migrants active in social movements and magazines production.**

## OTHER PROBLEMS AND PROPOSALS

A multilingual magazine **has** to report State crimes against migrants (deaths at the borders, in the sea, in camps and detention centres, police repression etc.). Monitoring is necessary to prevent these crimes taking place unnoticed. On the other hand, there is the **danger to transform crimes into a banality.** The magazine should create hope and empower people, not drag them deeper into despair.

Bringing struggles together can motivate action and replace tears.

In such a magazine, presenting the struggles by Sindicato Popular de Vendedores Ambulantes de Barcelona – TopManta, or the July 12 (2019) occupation of the Panthéon by the Gilets Noirs could **provide inspiration and encouragement.**

Moreover, publishing analyses like **the TSC presentations by Afrique-Europe-Interact activists could place the issue of migration in its larger context.**

At the same time, a web-based journal could help **communicate migrants’ struggles** (uprisings in detention camps/hot spots or Migrant Labour strikes) to other migrants and also to the locals’ movements, aspiring to help **generate solidarity actions.**

**It is crucial that legal matters and specific trials are followed and discussed.** It has been proved, for example, that when there is intense movement interest in a legal case, the outcomes of the trials are always better: The obvious examples are the trials against migrant solidarity squats in 2016 in Thessaloniki where both Europeans and migrants had been involved: The courts did not want to deal with a full room of angry people in solidarity with migrants. Even more important cases have been the incarcerations and trials of migrants who had participated in protests in camps: When nobody found out about them, migrants were practically swallowed by a black hole: They were kept for lengthy pre-trial detention and then, usually, convicted (several cases in “Metagogon” police station used for immigration detention, the Moria 8 that were declared innocent after 11 months of pre-trial detention etc.). Migrants were prosecuted even for extremely “lightweight” cases (e.g. alleged participation in a sitting protest in Lesvos). A multilingual magazine should **be part of solidarity campaigns;** it should be accessible to migrants, so they can use its (digital or printed) pages to make similar repression cases public.

A network of multilingual magazines could be the next infrastructure our movement builds in an horizontal and transnational way. It can play a role similar to what the indymedia network played at the beginnings of the ‘global movement for social justice’.

## If we can't have çay together, it's not my revolution

SKETCHES TOWARDS A POLITICS OF ANTI-RACIST  
FRIENDSHIP AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE COMMON AMONG  
UNEQUALS

*Newroz Duman und Niki Kubaczek<sup>1</sup>*

“Solidarity is not writing a co-authored appeal. Solidarity means getting to know each other and spending time together.” With this motto in mind, **We'll come United** brought large cushions and semawars (Turkish tea cookers) under a garden tent to create a place in the shade where the coming revolution could be dreamed and planned.

This shady spot was one of the few shelters from the sweltering heat that were spread out on the ZAD grounds. Here, near Nantes, the **Transborder Camp** took place from 10 to 13 July 2019, bringing together several hundred anti-racist activists from all over Africa and Europe. The **ZAD – Zone a Defendre** – was occupied by many different people united around the desire that the meadows and forests not be flattened for a huge international airport project. Among the supporters of ZAD are anarchists who have nothing less than the destruction of global capitalism in mind, as well as doctors who don't feel like letting the planes over their heads ruin the idyll of the family home and the value of their property. Heterogeneity not only characterized the guests at the **ZAD** – the anti-racist activists from very different places in Africa and Europe, who came in part with very different motives – but also the hosts. “In this respect, it was very difficult to conduct this struggle for the ZAD together, between Molotov cocktail throwing and petition writing. What we saw in any case is: a common enemy helps immensely. But when it comes to building a community as diversity, many have left,” one of the squatters of the **ZAD** told the **Transborder** guests during the welcome round.

“So the question has always been what can be done against fractioning. After all, we're talking about different fights here ... Our goal was and is clearly to become more and more autonomous. That means having a mediation group that changes every month. The purpose of this group is not to be dependent on the police when conflicts arise. Nevertheless, there were still problems that we could not solve, where we failed ...”

<sup>1</sup> many thanks to Kelly Mulvaney for the feedback on the text



## CITY PLAZA IS EVERYWHERE!

With different backgrounds, reasons and motivations in turn, activists came to the **Transborder Camp** in the North of France from across Africa and Europe, to rack their brains over anti-racist strategies and possibilities. So here people with and without experience of racism came together, activists with and without the experience of illegalisation, with more or less money, so-called women, so-called men as well as other genders, people with more or less experience in activist self-organisation. With all these different experiences they had at least one thing in common: to oppose racism, to fight for freedom of movement and not to close their eyes to the brutality of racist violence.

Despite – but also because of – the intensification of racism, nationalism and fascism in Europe and beyond, there are self-organized networks fighting for the right of freedom of movement and caring for the right to stay. Strengthening these existing networks and thus building a corridor of solidarity was the declared goal of the **Transborder Camp**. This militant care and caring militancy therefore always consist of activities that at first sight seem to have

little to do with militancy: coordinating accommodation, organizing money, being there for and listening to each other. Places and infrastructure that enable care for each other in the midst of illegalisation, such as the shelter in Rabat or the **City Plaza Hotel in Athens**<sup>2</sup> are therefore essential in the fight against illegalisation and the racist border regime.

Anti-racist work, self-organization and support of migrants is always also a matter of developing social relationships. These social relations continue, even if the visible symbols of this networking become targets of state repression. '**City Plaza** is everywhere!' was written on the banner made on the occasion of the closure of the **City Plaza** at the **Transborder Camp**. These social relations under the radar of visibility are the condition for building another society. They are the basis for not having to have the same hair color or passport anymore in order to be together. They are interconnections and shifts in society that create, at least in some marginal spaces, a certain uneasiness about contexts in which everyone is ticking or looking the same. Emphasizing the importance of social relationships among unequal people is much more than a naïve wish for harmony, because "if we don't build relationships, we can't face repression," as one activist pointed out on the first day of the camp.

### FIGHTS OVER BEING TOGETHER AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE COMMON AMONG UNEQUALS

So how to build these relationships? One thing is clear: relationships only emerge when we do not lecture each other, but listen to each other. And at the same time, relationships only develop when we are generous with each other, reach out to each other, give each other time and advance trust. When social relationships take on a form of friendship, a deportation does not only affect the deported person. It means loss to anyone who is a friend of that person that was deported. Of course it makes a substantial difference whether I am violently dragged away by the police to a place from which I escaped with the use of all means possible and maybe even at the risk of my life; or whether I will miss my deported friend without ever facing the possibility of being dragged away by the police to another country. However, it also makes a substantial difference whether someone is deported and nobody notices it, or whether someone is threatened with deportation and this leads a network to search for possibilities to prevent deportation, to an anti-deportation

<sup>2</sup> City Plaza, after being a vital place of refuge for years, had to close down during the time of the Transborder Camp

alliance, and to common repulsion towards deportation authorities and the current so-called 'foreigners and asylum law'. Sometimes such a mobilisation can prevent deportation, but often deportation takes place despite broader resistance. However, the mobilisation leads to skepticism among so-called citizens towards the prevailing migration and asylum policy. This skepticism does not help the deported friend, but it is the condition for condemning the current migration policy and thus for a more just understanding of who must be able to stay here in the future. Spreading distrust of both migration policy and normalised racism is not a guarantee, but it is the condition for a much better future in which everyone is entitled to rights, to stay and to a good life.

This future is facing a present in which racists increasingly determine the atmosphere, in the media as well as in the neighbourhood. To disrupt this atmosphere, to encourage each other and to make these connections visible was and is an explicit goal of **We'll Come United**<sup>3</sup>. During the **We'll Come United** Parade in Hamburg on September 29, 2018, 30,000 people took to the streets to celebrate antiracism. So it is not primarily about a specific campaign or a selective coming together of networks of refugees, migrant and solidarity groups, but rather about starting a common process, which negotiates the difficulties and the possibilities of coming together and of being on equal terms among sometimes extremely different life paths, experiences, wishes and ideas. It is about leaving the position that is defined exclusively by defense, even when we are under attack: we need to talk about how we want to live together – and this can only be done by getting to know each other. "Of course, there is a need for separate spaces in which people who have had similar experiences – for example, illegalised migration – can share them. But at least as important are rooms in which we come together and meet on a shared level. To do this, we must bring with us the desire to build the common, even if this can sometimes be complicated or take a long time," emphasizes one activist. "We have a cooperation with the **CGT** [second largest French trade union] at **education sans frontieres**. When it comes to preventing deportations, this joint work is essential," explains Ousmane Diarra of the Malian Association of Deported **AME**. "We need to reflect together on what this coming-together can look like. We have to pull this question out of the darkness." And Pierre from the association of rejected Migrants **ARACEM** (L'Association des Refoulés d'Afrique Centrale au Mali) emphasizes: "The Europeans must understand why we came here. Many of those who have been deported to Dakar, for example, have gone crazy because of what they have

<sup>3</sup> We'll Come United is an antiracist network active in Germany, that exists since 2017 and focuses on strengthening the ties of solidarity and antiracism through various means.



experienced. The **IOM** [International Organisation of Migration] wants to scare the migrants. But you can't scare people who have accepted death. Once you've crossed that threshold, somehow you're not really living anymore." The border regime destroys people, as colonialism did and continues to do; this concerns not only the colonized, but also the colonizers – although in a very different way. Europe likes to talk about the human being and humanity yet murder humans everywhere they are found, at the corner of every one of their own streets, in all the corners of the globe, as Fanon already pointed out in his book **The Wretched of the Earth** from 1961. So what to do in the midst of racist, Eurocentric, disenfranchising and exploitative violence? "To go alone is quicker, but together we go further", Pierre is sure. So the question of what we have in common is not posed despite the manifold racist violence, but is posed precisely because of it: in order to be able to respond to it better and stronger. The Common is definitely not the form of coming together that happens when we forget about the violence some of us are faced with and others may have no clue about. The common is made possible only through negotiating and learning about the differences – regarding the different extent to which we are exposed to violence, exploitation and subjugation – among each other. It is this learning, unlearning and listening to each other, through which difference becomes less a contradiction to the common but rather to its precondition.

## OF WISHES AND EXPERIENCES

To build relationships it is essential to gain an understanding of the different realities and worlds that exist on this planet. Not forgetting the sometimes radical difference of experience is essential for being able to come together. Without the knowledge of each other, friendship is nothing more than an alleged friendship, emphasizes Achille Mbembe in his recently published book **Critique of Black Reason**. The lack of knowledge of one another constantly leads us to step on each other's toes, disappoint and hurt each other, even if we don't want to. For this reason, over the last few years, there has been a demand for self-criticism above all by those activists who do not experience racism on a daily basis themselves. This was very important in many anti-racist contexts for raising awareness that there is a difference between intention, the wish and the desire to counter racism, and actual or real anti-racist practice. In other words: just because someone means well, it does not automatically mean that their actions are good, right or helpful. Desire and reality do not coincide.

When Pat Parker, black lesbian feminist activist, poet and close friend of Audre Lorde, spoke to an audience of people both with and without personal experiences of racism at the feminist anti-imperialist congress BASTA in Oakland in 1980, she declared: "We must also define our friends and enemies based on their stance on imperialism." (Pat Parker (1983 [1981], p.239). As important as it is to pay attention to difference in experiences, we must also not forget the question of stance and intention. Certainly, the experiences we have and the position we are assigned to in society are anything but secondary. But at least as important is the question of what kind of society we want to live in, what kind of political attitude and practice we live in, and what wishes, intentions and desires we follow in our struggles. For just as desire and reality do not coincide, experience and desire do not coincide either.

Parker thanks everyone present for being here to fight together against imperialism and for feminism. But one thing she emphasizes: "[I]t is critically important to me that you who are here, that your commitment to revolution is based on the fact that you want revolution for yourself." (ebda, p. 240) The revolution can only succeed if we do not make it out of generosity, pity or conviction for the other, but only if we feel it to be our very own interest, our own deepest desire.

Thus, for Parker, friends and comrades are not primarily those with whom she shares (supposedly or actually) the same experiences, but rather those who have the same attitude towards imperialism and racism. What is important to her is that we don't make the revolution for the others with whom



we feel pity, but because we want it for ourselves. “When I listen to the problems of others, it is also very important to say why I am interested in his or her problems”, Riadh Ben Ammar emphasizes in the shadow of the big circus tent under which the few hundred activists try to hide from the scorching sun.

“The other illusion is that revolution is neat. It’s not neat or pretty or quick. It is a long dirty process. We will be faced with decisions that are not easy,” Parker knowingly proclaimed already 40 years ago. The question is what the difficulties are in the process of creating the common and fighting for an equal access to resources and rights for everyone. If we do not have equal access to resources then we need a process that allows equal access. This process is a challenge and it takes time as well as patience with each other. But if we give ourselves and each other time, listen to each other, and don’t get bogged down in privileges that we have, but instead share and use them, then the chances are not so bad that it will work out sooner or later. This process of building the common takes place as an ongoing engagement with the question of how to wrest the possibility of this common from its impossibility.

## ON AND BEYOND RACISM AND PATERNALISM

Among many other workshops a workshop on paternalism took place on the second day of the **Transborder Camp**. It was intended to open a space to discuss the difficulties that arise when people with very different experiences and approaches work together in a project or live together. It was unclear whether it would be a debate characterized by distrust and embarrassing silence or by trust and equal footing. The atmosphere at the beginning of the workshop was rather uneasy and hesitant. Apart from the question of who starts where and how, there was a further ambiguity as to whether the workshop should be open to everyone or only to those people subject to racism. In the end, the workshop was made open to everyone and lasted five hours. Some 150 people stood and sat together, got involved, talked and listened. Some came to use the room to talk about their experiences, their questions or their criticism, others preferred to listen quietly. The workshop began with stories about experiences of racism in the movement and paternalism in a squat.

“We live in a squat in Reimes, where we are 120 refugees. When journalists came here, they only asked questions of the white supporters” criticizes a comrade from Reimes. Another comrade who lives in Reimes continues: “I live in a squat in which many French people live with papers. Once when journalists came, those people insisted that I speak with the journalists. I spoke to them twice, then I refused. I was a victim of racism. Another time, when I

handed out plates during lunch, another white supporter told me not to do it, because he wants to do it. Then I went to my room because I was extremely annoyed by that statement. But when I saw him again, I decided to tell him that it’s not nice and that if we want to be in solidarity with each other, we have to treat each other with respect, no matter what papers we have”.

“I think there are two kinds of racism,” a French activist elaborates: “One is when people call refugees ‘my children’. And on the other hand, there are activists who believe that everything that refugees say is right. This once led to the fact that an activist who was affected by an abuse by a refugee did not go to the police to avoid giving a bad picture of the refugees. I really think that’s a problem.” So paternalism can be to belittle a person, but paternalism is also when we elevate a person and immunize them from any criticism.

“I think we are already much further ahead than a few years ago” a Kurdish comrade from Germany points out. “Today, we are much more successful than just recently in opening up a common space for people with different access to resources; that means that the people in the space also know about these different accesses and want to start a process. What are the challenges of self-organization? This is a question we have to discuss again and again and share everyday experiences. We know that there is paternalism – but we must also allow ourselves to become friends. This means that the focus is not my story of fleeing, but our common history. I got organized in a squat and at the beginning I always thought: yuck where did I end up. They had their fight, I had mine. The people in the squat were very well informed and gave me good advice. And it certainly wasn’t equality; that’s also not possible at the beginning. But it was a togetherness that was not against each other. It was solidarity that grew into friendship. If we don’t see this as a hobby, but take politics into everyday life, then we will also be able to speak on a shared level. It is not a temporary project, it is our life. Some of us are confronted with a lot of disenfranchisement and discrimination in this life, others perhaps almost not at all. Nevertheless, we can still have the common stance to fight against disenfranchisement and discrimination and to build structures of solidarity. We are a movement in movement. New people are joining us all the time. This also means that the experiences must be told again and again. These problems that we are discussing here, we won’t just get rid of. Some of us had to fight for our lives, others have no idea about such things. Understanding this as a strength takes us further than just criticizing each other. Of course it needs critical reflection, but above all it needs paying attention to what we have in common.”

“You will experience racism everywhere”, adds a Spanish comrade, “when in the subway there is talk of pickpockets and everyone looks at me.

Or a person turns around, sees a black person behind him and is scared. This is very hurtful, we need to talk more about this.” “On the tram they didn’t ask me for my ticket, they asked me for my papers,” continues an activist from Reims. “Then once again I had to go to the authorities – they simply didn’t accept my papers. Then I went there with a white person and they accepted the papers. I was so angry that the officer didn’t dare to look at me anymore. Another time I was insulted by a racist, so I just punched that white woman in the face. There is racism, yes, but we also have to learn to defend ourselves and not let it ruin our day. We don’t have to feel guilty when we are dominant. Yesterday I was in a workshop on self-organisation and people were talking about everything but self-organisation. Nobody interrupted them – that is also paternalism, letting people, just because they are affected by racism or have fled their home, just talk about something that is not the point at all. It is very important that we address things – like yesterday someone said in plenary that it is almost exclusively women in the kitchen here at the camp and that it is not acceptable. And lo and behold, now things changed.”

“We are talking about taboo subjects here and this is extremely important”, emphasizes Riadh Ben Ammar. “When I first got to know the radical left scene, I was very shocked by the way they all looked. When the activists from **No Lager** came and showed a film, there were suddenly two men kissing in the film – we were shocked. It’s difficult for migrants to stick with students and activists, for various reasons... But activism can also be a good therapy against depression, because activism is a way to express yourself and to break through isolation and depression. It needs this encounter – it’s not about you accepting me, it’s about us accepting each other. For this we have to build trust in each other at first; and that requires a lot of patience. We have to take each other seriously, but please no positive racism; this is a very terrible racism.”

Hence, transnational work requires patience. It is the condition for getting to know each other and connecting the struggles. This process, in which the connecting lines are created, is certainly not an easy one and that is exactly why it needs trust in each other and it needs the insistent desire to bring the struggles together. Sometimes it seems as if the specter of Pat Parker, almost exactly 30 years after her death, is haunting the packed gatherings in the shadow of the burning sun to bring the question of coming together out of the darkness again: “Another illusion that we suffer under in this country is that a single facet of the population can make revolution. Black people alone cannot make a revolution in this country. Native American people alone cannot make revolution in this country. Chicanos alone cannot make revolution in this country. Asians alone cannot make revolution in this country. White

people alone cannot make revolution in this country. Women alone cannot make revolution in this country. Gay people alone cannot make revolution in this country. And anyone who tries it will not be successful.”

If we want to be successful with the revolution one day, it will only happen together. For this we need spaces like the **Transborder Camp**, where the many thoughts, struggles, failed attempts and successes, languages, faces and stories of solidarity can come together. Spaces in which the everyday struggles, which today are transnationally connected, can encourage and celebrate together. Spaces that, in difficult times, make it possible to exchange experiences and perspectives, to learn from one another, to create connections across borders and to be open to new relationships. The condition for this coming together is made by many transnational lines that run across the Balkan route, from Kurdistan to Sudan, from Ljubljana to Tunis to Bamako, from Chemnitz to Izmir, from Ouagadougou to Hanau to Athens and Alexandria. These lines of solidarity and common struggle refer to courage and hope for new processes, to inspiration, friendships, joy, tears, love, quirks and madness, to a for and with each other, without which history would never have been written.

To make revolution is to learn serenity and mutual trust in a brutal and shattering world, where there is no reason for serenity, friendship and patience with one another. At the same time, patience with and trust in each other is the only possibility to live in this world and to fight for a better future. We are not talking here about a serenity that would mean if we would only stop talking about ugly things, then everything would be fine. The serenity we are talking about here is rather that of the comrade, who resolutely throws her fist in the face of the racist, who insults her full of hatred, then continues to slurp the Çay with her friend and does not let her day be ruined.

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Credit: Mediterranean

## LGBTIQ and women\* on the Move

Same-sex relations are prohibited by law in 70 countries worldwide, and the death penalty is imposed on lesbian or gay love in eight countries (Human Rights Watch 2019). In many more, due to social norms or religious traditionalism, it is impossible for LGBTIQ to live their sexual preference. However, the threat and stigmatization does not end as soon as LGBTIQ refugees reach Europe. On the contrary – due to the lack of support structures by their communities in the transit countries and the violent situation in the European camp and hotspot system, they are forced to continue hiding their sexual orientation and cannot trust anyone. In this situation, it is extremely difficult to successfully assert reasons for fleeing related to one's sexual identity.

Transgender identity and same-sex love are often closely tied to social taboos and are worded differently than in Western societies, making it difficult to be perceived as credible by European asylum institutions. They are also expected to provide testimony or “evidence” of their sexual orientation. This burden of proof is almost impossible to provide without endangering family members and friends or former partners.

As Angel, a gay woman from Zimbabwe put it in an interview with BBC: „But how do you prove something you spent your life trying to hide?“ (‘How do I convince the Home Office I’m a lesbian? Kirstie Brewer BBC News 26 February 2020)

Sexual violence and torture has been and still is a major weapon of war throughout history. The organisation SEMA is fighting to end rape as a weapon of war by putting survivors of sexual violence in conflict at the core of their activities. SEMA literally means “Speak Out” in Swahili. There are survivors of wartime rape from 21 countries in Africa, South America, the Middle East, and Europe represented in the network. They represent 2,000 survivors of 90 years of conflict. The work of SEMA was presented by one of the workshop participants and very enriching to those who hadn't heard of it before.

In Syrian prisons, women\* were (and still are) systematically tortured and raped. Besides the reasons to leave their country valid for all genders, women\* are fleeing from forced marriages or genital mutilation. Or they are the ones who set out to earn money for their indebted families as care workers or sexual workers in Europe. But throughout their entire migratory trajectories, women\* are affected disproportionately by violence. Especially women\* who have fled from Libya testify of unimaginable suffering prior to their departure. But the sexual violence and exploitation is happening to them on the whole journey and as well when they reach Europe. This is especially serious as most of them expected to be safe in the end and healing of traumatic experiences can only begin once they are in a safe place. Men using their situation far away from family, friends and their normal surroundings to abuse them are among their male travel companions as well as border guards or security staff in European camps.

In the workshop on Women\* and LGBTIQ on the move, we came together to exchange on our different support practices and experiences. Our support structures are mostly very local, close to the needs and interests of the women\*/LGBTIQ and their specific situations in different stages of their journeys. They include counselling and legal advice, offering safe spaces and shelters, health care and basic social needs, creating trustful spaces to meet, take care of the children as well as creating networks and campaigning to raise awareness on the level of institutions and governmental structures. We realized that

even if our experiences and knowledge are quite similar, the special requirements imposed on women\*/LGBTIQ on the move mean that our support has to be a mixture of social work and political work on a daily basis and is not easily transferred to a transnational level. What is required and useful in the camps inside Europe is different from the transit locations like Morocco and between France and Great Britain or in all the cities across Europe where women\*, LGBTIQ and children are settled but in still insecure resident permit situations. Healing the wounds of sexual violence suffered before, during and after the journey is a long process and needs arriving in a safe place above all. It was an encouraging and inspiring experience to learn from all the present collectives and groups from Morocco to France, from Lesvos to Calais, how they deal with the difficulties they face, what tools and ways they have developed and how they adapt to quickly changing situations. A lot of us were active in general migration struggles as well as in women\*/LGBTIQ struggles because migrants are travelling together and the situation without rights that they face are in many ways the same. To address the special situation of and organize together with women\*/LGBTIQ is therefore often extra work besides the „all together struggles“. Especially before they reach an at least provisional place of rest, they are forced to be very mobile. Continuously organizing and building stable groups or networks is not easy. Once arrived in a European city, women\* and LGBTIQ join the existing local structures or create their own ones to fight, organize support or counseling for new arrivals. Then it is easier to organize together and develop a common structure of struggles. In bigger cities, too, this is easier than in the countryside or in some Eastern European countries, where local women\*/LGBTIQ groups face harsh stigmatisation or criminalisation themselves. Sharing the rich and diverse ways of organizing in flexible and often volatile circumstances for the rights of women\*/LGBTIQ on the move is very needed and useful. At the Transnational Summer Camp the workshop concluded with plans to create a common email list to have the potential to stay in contact or address a local group directly for „bilateral needs“. We agreed to inform us mutually on events which might be interesting for all. Some collectives working on similar grounds, for example in creating shelters, wanted to stay in contact to keep on information exchange. We were realistic in the estimation that in this composition we will not come together quickly again. But we are strongly in favor of realizing Women\*/LGBTIQ on the move workshops in all transnational events in different composition around the Balkans, around the Mediterranean Sea, around the Solidarity Cities or Palermo Charter processes.



## Black Box Deportations – Fighting the European Deportation Regime

Anti-Deportation struggles – about the need to create the ground for common strategies, shared practices and campaigns in order to raise public awareness and increase capacities to prevent deportation on various levels.

Deportations have many faces: there are Dublin, charter or chain deportations, there is so-called voluntary return, and there are push-backs. On the one hand, there are terrible images of people chained to airplane seats, there are photos of planes full of handcuffed people surrounded by police officers. And we all know the stories of people being detained right after upon arrival. On the other hand, however, of many more deportations, we never learn. They happen out of our sight and knowledge, without even the possibility to scandalise. A large part of the deportation-machinery remains hidden. So how can we unveil the mechanisms behind the machinery, how can we make vital knowledge accessible, how can we cast light into the Black Box of deportations?

To efficiently resist the logic of borders, fences and the competitive reality created by nation states, we need to join forces. Anti-deportation-struggles

take place on many different levels. We aim to improve the visibility of these levels to include more people into our struggles, to empower people to act for themselves but also in order to learn about successful and failed attempts within our daily struggles. To do so, we need to revitalize our network, update our connections and exchange more regularly – in person as well as through various existing channels.

### SINCE THE TIME THAT DEPORTATIONS EXIST, THERE WAS RESISTANCE

At the Transborder Summer Camp 2019 in the ZAD, we discussed our involvement in the struggle against Dublin deportations, charter deportations to countries of origin, the support of deportees' self-organisation in Mali and Togo as well as the fights against mass deportation from Algeria and Libya mainly to Niger. Various anti-deportation groups presented their work and shared their experiences. Almost 100 persons participated in the Anti-Deportation Workshop at the Transborder Summer Camp. During the first part we realized that the multiplicity and diversity of anti-deportation struggles complicate an in-depth analysis of common struggles and strategies. Groups from more than 14 countries shared their specific focuses, varying from struggles against detention, Dublin and charter deportations, chain deportations, “voluntary” return, the support of deportees in countries of origin, push backs as well as topics like awareness, the role of civil society, campaigning and direct actions. The groups illustrated the ugly face of the European border regime by sharing experiences of their fears, difficulties of mobilizing in rural areas, specific local struggles, problems with the increasing violence in general and activist burn-outs. At the same time, we had the chance to hear empowering stories of prevented deportations by direct actions like blockades, migrant self-organizations or citizen asylum. We heard details about successful legal fights, got insights into detention centres and the support of detainees and deportees as well as the opportunities of media coverage, successfully established alliances with passionate lawyers and social workers, transnational campaigning and strategies against repression.

By using new forms of detention, mass deportations and a more rigid system of surveillance and control, authorities all around the globe tighten the deportation-regime. During the last years, the scope of anti-deportation struggles has been narrowed down by an always stricter, more unpredictable and invisible regime. The repressive strategies of authorities against migrants led to longer detention, faster procedures and an increase of violence. Often,

we don't know the exact date, the route or anything else. Most of the time not even lawyers know details about their client's fate. This development makes it difficult to effectively prevent deportations and demands adapted, new and creative strategies in order to open new doors in the fight against the deportation regime.

However, during the last years new and different ways have been found. Companies that profit from deportations have been exposed and attacked. Through the continuous and tireless work, many deportations have been prevented. When it comes to anti-deportation-struggles, the exchange between various actors is key for effective resistance. There must be a close interaction between structures in the so-called countries of origin, migrated communities and their self-organised networks and anti-deportation structures. If information flows better from one side to the other, we can more effectively counteract the contemporary deportation regime, which is built on a racist idea of categorization and exclusion based on these categories.

### DIFFERENT LEVELS OF STRUGGLES – LET'S OPEN NEW DOORS

In the following, we want to outline the different levels of struggles within destination countries as well as the EU.

First and most importantly, practical support and resistance is needed in order to prevent or resist deportations, detention or push-backs. There are various ways of practical support and resistance. There are projects like “Zurich legal” or the various Refugee Law Clinics in Germany who have established effective legal capacities to fight against deportation detention. Legal support proved to be a very effective way to prevent deportation. However, there are also other practices to mention in case a deportation cannot be prevented by legal means anymore. Citizen asylum (Bürger\*innenasyl), church asylum, or the creation of a local underground railroad make it possible for people to hide and exist – even though they will depend on the support of the involved solidarity structures. Blockades and nightly demonstrations can also prevent the authorities from entering camps where deportations can happen every night.

Secondly, we have to inform and confront the society with the reality of deportations. Only by raising awareness and by effectively establishing a counter discourse, it will be possible to change people's mind of how they think or act in the light of deportations. At the same time, it will enable alliances with civil society actors, institutionalized initiatives and organizations without

losing the sharpness of anti-deportation demands. This should also include a closer exchange with people and structures in destination countries in order to improve information on what happens to people after being deported. Recently, this proved to be a very effective strategy to inform and scandalise deportations to countries such as Afghanistan among others through cooperation with the Afghan Migrants Advice and Support Organization (Amaso). In addition, direct actions at airports such as in Vienna or Frankfurt, large occupation of public spaces such as “Gegenlager” in Zurich, public campaigns such as brusselsstopdeportations.net, rejections of pilots to deport people and passengers demanding the halt of deportations in the airplanes such as the successful attempt in Istanbul, which was well documented by “getting the voice out”, received a lot of public attention. This opens the door for new people to get involved into anti-deportation struggles but also to share information around deportations and the migration regime as such.

Third, we have to create a better exchange between the various anti-deportation structures here and elsewhere. One mean could be to create transnational campaigns to enlighten or target a specific topic or actor in different places. Collective and transborder resistance against the deportation-regime has to emerge, as a strong network. Trustful relations will allow us to find new ways in our path towards freedom of movement for everyone. Only well-connected groups will be able to work strategically against a common European Asylum system, can break deportation and supply chains and inform each other about deportation destinations. Sharing struggles, strategies and experiences and join forces will empower anti-deportations initiatives and help to establish important knowledge to strengthen global resistance. We need a network of resistance spanning every corner, every city.

### GILETS NOIRS AS AN INSPIRATION TO FURTHER PUSH OUR STRUGGLES

While being in the ZAD last summer, we received the information about 600 Sans Papiers, actively resisting against the racist state in France, self-confidently calling for their rights and very clearly condemning their marginalization. They called themselves Gilets Noirs. They first publicly appeared in September 2018, when they held a sit-in in front of a theatre in order to confront the minister of interior with the miserable conditions, in which they were forced to live. Then, at May 20, they blocked with several hundred people the terminal 2F of the Parisian airport Charles de Gaulle. They were singing, dancing, yelling and speaking in and to the public, demanding Air France

to immediately stop their involvement in deportation-flights. The protestors demanded that Air France “stop any financial, material, logistical or political involvement” in the deportations and publicly denounced the pressure on Air France staff and passengers who oppose deportations. Four representatives of the Gilets Noirs later met with a delegation of Air France – even though the company did not change their practices, the Gilets Noirs succeeded in claiming a huge audience and distributing their views and demands through the whole country. By doing so, they inspired many other groups to undertake action, to start organizing themselves or to spread their words – on local as well as on interregional levels. The success of the Gilets Noirs is to embed their struggle into a wider context. They unveiled the connection between colonial history of France (occupation of the Panthéon), the racist asylum regime with its exploitative economic system (blockade at catering company Elior to criticize exploitation of sans papier workers and Elior’s involvement in the camp-system), and the deportation machinery (protest at the airport, action against Air France) – hopefully they’ll be an inspiration for other local or transnational actions.

Following our discussion in the ZAD some groups organized a first network meeting of anti-deportation groups in Osnabrück, Germany in March. During the meeting different groups shared their experiences and strategies against deportations. It was agreed to further foster transnational connections and to continue the process of establishing and deepening transnational bonds, information flows and strategy exchanges. Therefore, a next meeting of anti-deportation groups should be held in the second half of the year.

In a time where deportations are not announced anymore and the spreading of appointments of charter deportations is being criminalized, strategies must change. As a reaction to the changing deportation regime we need to establish better cooperation with activists all over Europe and form alliances with self-organisations of so-called “countries of origin” to support deportees locally. An aim of such a network will be to establish a thorough analysis of actors and infrastructures of the European deportation regime to be able to understand its logic and supply chains in order to enable practical but also sustainable political interventions. We have to seek empowerment on an individual but also collective and on a political level in order to comprehensively understand and destroy the deportation regime and replace it with the right to stay.

*For an end of the deportation regime. For the right to stay. We stand united. Against all deportations.*

## Freedom of movement in the Balkans during the pushback era

*Infokolpa, activist initiative from Ljubljana/Slovenia*

One of the routes that migrants and people-on-the-move use to reach the destinations in Europe and other parts of the planet is called the Balkan route. The road usually starts already in Turkey going forward by sea, mostly via Greece, or by land via Bulgaria to Romania, or Northern Macedonia or Albania, heading onward to Serbia or Montenegro, if 'lucky' via Hungary, if not via Bosnia and Herzegovina, then Croatia, Slovenia, and finally Italy and Austria. One of the strategic plans of the European Union is to spread its rule on the territories of the Western Balkans; both Slovenia and Croatia are member states of the EU, and Serbia is the candidate. Slovenia is in the Schengen zone since 2007, Croatia has been waiting to enter the unified standard EU border regime since 2016.

Struggles and movements know very well what happened in springtime in 2016, borders that were open to creating the so-called Balkan corridor stopped migrants from passing ahead. European Union started giving out instructions on how to close the borders; by the beginning of 2017, Serbia became the most significant hotspot in the Balkans. Hungary completely closed its borders, built high wired walls, abused all rights, and established a limbo zone in between the borderlines. Croatia began implementing the pushbacks. Slovenia followed by setting the wired fences in the south and pushing people massively back to Croatia from May 2018.

Pushback is an illegal act from the side of the police authorities preventing migrants and refugees from asking for international protection and physically forcing them to cross the border backward between countries, either Croatia and Bosnia, or Croatia and Serbia, or Slovenia and Croatia. Both police forces from Croatia and Slovenia (both EU member states) violently deny the right to apply for asylum for all, male, women, children and minors. As a result of the pushback policy in 2017, Medina died, aged six, a little girl from Afghanistan. The number of people who die in forests, drown in rivers, or get handicapped on trail roads is growing fast by 2020.

In 2020 there are tens of thousands of people wandering in trapped in the countries of the Balkan region, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been classified as a humanitarian catastrophe since autumn 2019. Serbia and Bosnia together are running almost 30 temporary migrant camps; many people still try to survive in squats, self-organized habitats without primary

trans border summer camp

living conditions. Nearly 200 people spent the winter period 2019/2020 outside of the bus station in Tuzla, BiH, day from day, a month from a month. Owing to mostly local and grass-roots initiatives, they survived and entered springtime.

Freedom of movement is under the stake for the bravest and the most vulnerable at the same time, the border regime of the European Union is fulfilling its policies by:

- using the countries in the Balkans as humiliating hotspots,
- using the candidate countries to institutionalize the externalization policies of its border regime beyond the borders of Fortress Europe,
- using physical violence implemented by the national police and other uniformed (paramilitary) units at the borderlines (shootings, beatings, kidnapping, torture, stealing and breaking the belongings, threats, abuse),
- repressing solidarity from the bottom, silencing the voices of refugees and migrants, denying them freedom of movement outside of closed camps,
- carrying out illegal collective expulsions of migrants from EU member states like Croatia and Slovenia, etc.



For regular reports about violations and pushbacks, please follow: [www.borderviolence.eu](http://www.borderviolence.eu). The Border Violence Monitoring Network is releasing monthly reports covering the ground situation in countries of the Balkan peninsula. The accurate description of illegal practices of collective expulsion on the border between Slovenia and Croatia you can read here: <https://push-forward.org/porocilo/report-illegal-practice-collective-expulsion-slovene-croatian-border>

What we have been witnessing in the late four years (from 2016) from the perspective of the autonomy of migration is that the Balkan corridor might have been officially closed, but the Balkan route has never been so alive before. The everyday struggles for dignified living conditions, ongoing strong actions from sans-papier, anti-deportation fights, thousands of small solidarity initiatives throughout Europe have had a chance to grow on the Balkans, too.

If the European Union is trying to incorporate and integrate Balkans by posing its restrictive and repressive border regime from above, the grass-roots solidarity networks from the Balkans are merging with various and enriched European experiences on how to fight back the humiliation of closed borders and how to struggle for Europe for all from below. Resistance along the Balkan route is growing; it has many as many difficulties as amusing sides of organizing in the light of the local contexts.

Networking (Balkan Route Networking, Still Moving Europe) that started in 2016 has been continuing all these years; different grass roots groups participated in Transborder Summer Camp in ZAD, Nantes in 2019 as a part of the workshops Networking on the Balkan Route and Push Back Mapping, reports from the ground were presented and many ties connected.

With the growing number of migrants passing the Balkans more and more initiatives to appear, grass-roots will double, and fight for a better world will flourish.

The global South will come closer to the global North by multiplying struggles of the poor and people-on-the move!

*Viva freedom of movement and right to stay!*

[www.facebook.com/infokolpa/](https://www.facebook.com/infokolpa/)  
[infokolpa@gmail.com](mailto:infokolpa@gmail.com)



Street vendors in Barcelona in February 2019

## Migrant Labour Struggles

Migrant labour struggles were NOT a bigger topic in the summer camp – as it happens unfortunately often in antiracist events. The resistance against the murderous external borders and against the injustice of deportations – or vice versa for freedom of movement and for the right to stay – appear usually as first priorities in antiracist struggles. But if we perceive the borders not as a simple machinery of exclusion rather as a regime of selective inclusion, if we understand the aim of brutal exploitation behind the construction of complex hierarchies by status and subsequent (non) rights, if we see the importance of this exploitative system of “internal borders” in all the low paid sectors for the existence of capitalism, then we should pay more and regular attention and capacities into these struggles.



In the summer camp at least one slot of discussion was dedicated to migrant labour issues. In the first part of the workshop in Nantes we played the social strike game, an immersive role playing game where the participants play an activist group trying to organize a social strike. The participants were familiarized with the idea of a social strike and practiced thinking about how to organize across and over different social groups and with various methods of interventions. The game was organized by Transnational Social Strike activists from Sweden and it was an inspiring and dynamic experience to learn about the approach of social strikes. It was developed by activists in UK on the background of the transnational social strike platform. This network exists since 2015 and find a summary about the platform by friends from Precarious Disconnection in Bologna in the 1. box (page 66).

In the second part of the workshop a senegalese friend from Barcelona presented their top manta project of street vendors, its founding, background and experiences. Its a very interesting and impressive initiative of selforganizing, of connecting the reason of migration with the struggle for rights in Europe in and against an important precarious sector of mainly migrant labour. Find more at <http://manteros.org> and also in the 2<sup>nd</sup> box (on page 68).

Besides a few short hints on migrant labour struggles in France (also on the legal level) the session in Nantes ended with a report about the seasonal workers campaign in Austria (see the 3<sup>rd</sup> box on page 70).

Transnational social strike, Top Manta from Barcelona and Sezonieri-Campaign in Austria – three interesting and impressive examples of migrant labour struggles were presented and re-discussed in Nantes. Hopefully it was not only an inspiration for the participants of the workshop but also for several talks during the summer camp afterwards. And hopefully it contributed to more attention and continuous activities and engagement in migrant labour struggles.



## TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL STRIKE

The Transnational Social Strike (TSS) Platform aims at involving different kinds of workers – women and men, those employed in factories, those who experience the normality of precarity, locals and migrants – in a political process against subordination and exploitation. It is open to workers, groups and unions across Europe and beyond that share a common goal.

What do we mean by transnational social strike and why to start a process towards this goal?

We experience every day that things in the workplaces and in society have changed. Organization of labor struggles is weakened by the divisions between those who work in the same hub, factory, school, call center etc. Solidarity is challenged by the differences of contracts, time of employment, political conditions such as residence permits or welfare rights. Labour disputing is more and more difficult and it is often not enough to stop the increasing precarization. National divisions imposed on labor obstruct the capacity to fight back against the transnational dimension of production and exploitation. As a result, a little conquest by one can sometimes be a loss for many others: be they workers in other countries with lower wages and income or temp workers in the same factory, young interns or migrants and refugees forced to work for free to get their visa.

The TSS process is born from the assumption that there is no technical way out to this situation: only a political movement can overturn the state of affairs according to which we are just numbers and shares in the balance sheets of the governments' technocrats and capitalists. The strike is for us the name of a power that aims at damaging the pillars on which this unequal and unjust society is grounded. Building the conditions to exercise this power is what we need in order to overthrow the current state of subordination to employers and politicians.

While normally labor struggles and migrants' struggles are discussed as separated issues, the TSS process was born also to build a bridge between them. Since its beginning, the Transnational Social Strike Platform has assumed the movements and the struggles of migrants as the cornerstone of



its transnational political initiative, starting from its centrality in the continuous reconfiguration of the European space. A multinational workforce characterized by a steady mobility, by precariousness and confronted by a mobility regime with common trends is present today in Europe. The fact that today's Europe is literally built on the exploitation of migrant labor affects all workers.

Therefore, today the strike needs to be transnational and social.

Transnational because capital works and thinks transnationally, creating divisions among countries, wages, working conditions and nationalities to weaken us and make profits. Only by facing and overturning these divisions we can aspire at increasing our power and make ourselves heard. In this, we refuse to be labeled either as anti-EU or pro-EU: we deem insufficient to organize at the national level, as the transnational dimension is our battlefield and is for us a common space of organization where to find allies and enemies.

Social because the power of the strike cannot be restricted to some categories of workers, trade unions or groups of supporters. The strike is a weapon that everyone has to be able to hold and use throughout society: even those who are constantly changing jobs, the migrants who risk their residence permit, the students and the unemployed. The strike can become for them a chance to be in the frontline, to organize and to overthrow the political conditions of exploitation. There must be no exclusion from the strike movement: this is the basis of our understanding of solidarity and social strike.

The TSS Platform is a political infrastructure to confront these challenges. It is a reservoir of experiences and tactics to politicize labor struggles, to connect social and labour struggles, and make their claims heard well beyond each group's and union's capacity. It is a space of organization, communication and encounter where different figures of labour can think together about how to develop a common discourse, how to support common claims capable of being instruments of emancipation and how to build the conditions of possibility of the transnational social strike.

**Contact:** [info.transnationalstrike@protonmail.com](mailto:info.transnationalstrike@protonmail.com)

**Website:** [www.transnational-strike.info](http://www.transnational-strike.info)

## THE MANTEROS FROM BARCELONA AND TOP MANTA

Many people think they know what top manta and the top manta vendors are, but only a few have come and talked to us and asked us what our story is. Everybody has a story to tell. This is ours.

### 2014

Our journey starts in senegal. We used to be able to fish on our shores to make a living, but eventually the fishing multinationals, among them spanish companies, established themselves in the area, and little by little they took from us all chance of surviving as fishermen. If we are able to tell you this story, it's because we managed to get to europe. We crossed borders filled with excitement for a better life.

### 2015

A group of 200 street vendors in barcelona joined forces together and founded the street vendors' trade union to have our own voice, stand up for our rights and negotiate with the public administrations.

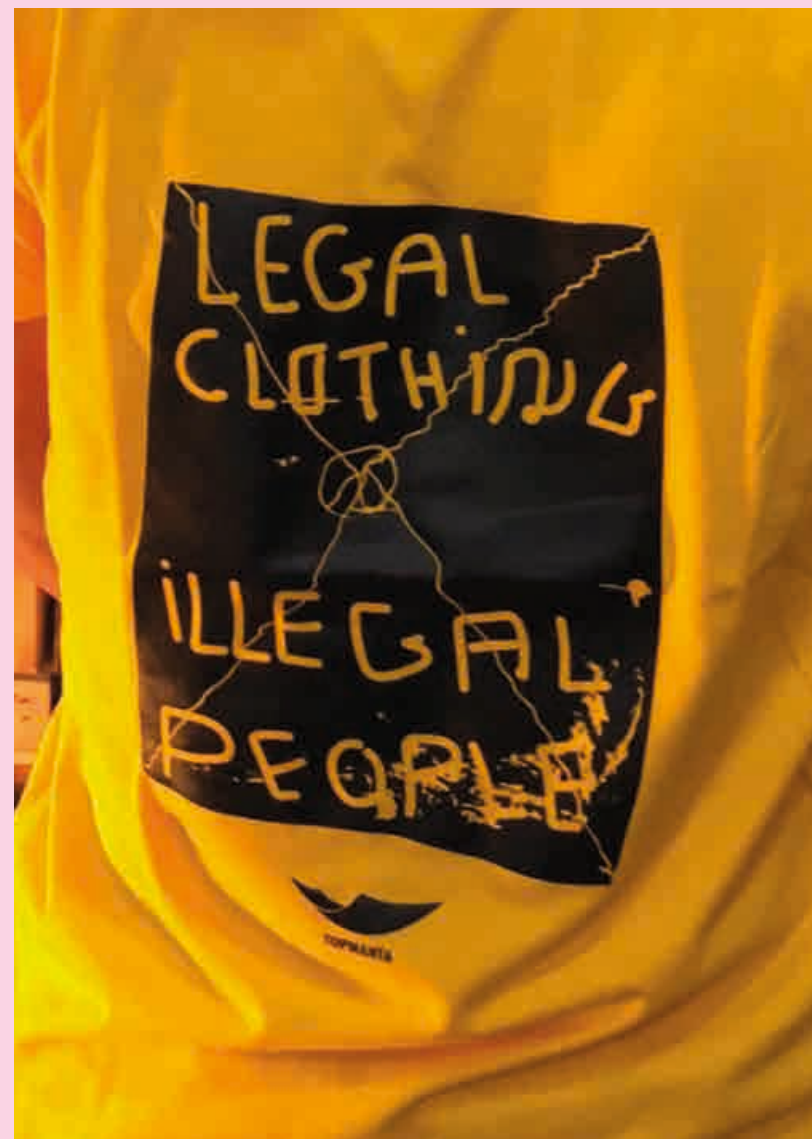
### 2017

We launched the top manta brand with the intent to improve our living standards as a group, help get people off the street, and develop creative communication campaigns to explain the injustices of a fake system.

### 2019

Top manta has become a social and political agent of reference in the city of barcelona and is closely intertwined with multiple social movements. Thanks to the brand we have been able to legalise the lives of many colleagues.

(Full text in english here: <https://manteros.org/loteriamantera/?lang=en>)



## SEZONIERI-CAMPAIGN FOR THE RIGHTS OF (MIGRANT) HARVEST WORKERS IN AUSTRIA

Legal background: The legal constructs “harvest work” and “seasonal work” are temporary work relations which do not offer any longterm perspective for employment. Harvesters and seasonal workers (from outside the EU) require work permits, issuing of which is limited to regulated contingents specified for each federal state. Meanwhile the majority employed in agriculture are mainly (temporary) migrants and commuters originating from so-called new EU member states of Eastern and Southern Europe, who, currently with the exception of Croatian nationals, benefit from free access to the labor market. During work-intense periods agriculture and forestry is the sector ranking highest with regard to the share of employees of migrant origin.

The situation is even more complex with regards to collective bargaining agreements. Depending on the federal state, as well as the type of business (farming, gardening, winery etc.), different types of collective bargaining agreements apply. However, they all share a commonality: the legally binding – but in practice all too often violated – minimum wage for unskilled agricultural work is low, ranging from 6,70 to 7,30 Euro gross – meaning prior to deduction of taxes and social insurance contributions.

Agricultural production: Not only is Austria characterized by a vicious circle in agricultural production, price pressures generated by wholesale are pushing agri-cultural businesses to produce for less money, there is also little organized resistance, mainly initiated by small-scale actors. European and national agricultural policies are primarily about increasing cultivated land, however the disastrous price policy for agricultural products leads to a systematic over-exploitation of labor forces – be it of relatives working in the family enterprise, or of employees. Whereas large businesses manage to maximize profits by adopting this strategy, the smaller ones can hardly sustain their economic survival. Moreover, “organic” and “regional” production does not guarantee fair production.



Sezonieri Campaign: The Sezonieri Campaign aims at addressing the inclusion of labor rights and anti-racist debates in the realm of agriculture and, conversely, at the inclusion of agricultural concerns in the sphere of trade union work. The Sezonieri Campaign is a joint initiative run by a range of actors based within the trade union, migrant, and agricultural contexts. The main goal is to raise awareness about existing collective bargaining rights, labor and social law, as well as to offer support in enforcing these rights at the individual and collective levels. Secondly, the Sezonieri Campaign supports labor struggles and processes of self-organization. Thirdly, the campaign aims at improving the living and working conditions of employees in the agricultural sector in significant and sustainable ways, rather than on a temporary basis. We circulate information in a range of languages, offer a phone line, proactively get in touch with workers in the fields, campaign with large banners in the border regions, give legal advice and support, and do media work. The collaboration between members of trade unions, employees of NGO's, and activists is crucial for our work. Although the diversity in organizational cultures and working styles may be challenging at times, it is precisely this mix in competences that makes this campaign successful. Being activists based in various social and anti-racist struggles, the Sezonieri Campaign represents a concrete practice of standing up against precarity and enabling a context that enhances our capacity to act in solidarity.

Achievements and challenges: In part, the campaign achieved further, but more indirect improvements – for instance through strengthening the negotiation powers of harvesters by providing legal information; or by raising public pressure and thereby forcing employers to give in to workers, demands. Workers in agriculture are now using the knowledge disseminated as part of this campaign on minimum wages, maximum working hours etc. in order to achieve some punctual improvements in their work relations. But even so, challenges persist: our lack of competence in various languages creates occasional hurdles; we are facing the difficult tasks of building trust and continuous organization in a sector characterized by the permanent movement of its workers; we have so far not found enough points of leverage to exercise pressure more systematically in order to move beyond successful singular case work and achieve enduring changes in work and social relations. Finally, the goal to create social spaces for, and supporting, the self-organization of workers in trade unions is yet to be reached.

## NEW AND OLD UPRISINGS:

## Social Struggles in Algeria, Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia

It is summer 2019, and this year we witnessed another wave of visible and effective social movements in Algeria and Sudan, where a large part of society took to the streets, creating platforms for political debate and demanding the end of dictatorship and the demand for a government composed not of the military but of civil society.

These movements did not suddenly appear out of nowhere and an opinion-forming and political organisation 'from below', from the population, has existed for many years in Sudan and Algeria under the strictest repressive military regimes. However, they only became visible to a broad public in 2018/2019 – in Sudan with the overthrow of Omar al Bashir on April 11, 2019, who had been oppressing for 30 years, and in Algeria with the prevention of a fifth term in office for the almost 20-year dictator Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

We remember 2011, the uprisings that started in Tunisia and brought widespread attention and hope for freer societies through Egypt and Libya.

Since revolutions are not isolated events, but developments that last for years, at the Nantes Summer Camp we discuss with friends from Algeria, Sudan, Tunisia and Egypt the current challenges in the contested societies.

We exchange ideas about common ground and solidarity. We are in search of capacity to act in the face of an unscrupulous, neo-colonial, conservative elite and in the face of Islamist forces, which represent a constant challenge in all four countries. We are looking for ways of not letting feelings of powerlessness in the face of power relations end in a capitulation of the struggles of social movements. We emphasize the enormous strength of an organization of people fighting for freedom, peace, democracy and freedom of expression between neo-colonial and neo-liberal alliances, between anger and power and a clear commitment to common debates without fear with people of different experiences and opinions.

In Egypt as well as in Sudan, Tunisia and Algeria, the people who are mobilising are very strong. However, major challenges for the social movements are on the one hand the colonial heritage and on the other hand the Islamist groups that are trying to take over the revolutions.

In the debate, specific experiences from the four countries are introduced, differences are emphasized and common possible strategies are exchanged.

## EGYPT

A contribution from the Egyptian perspective emphasizes "learning by doing" as a characteristic of the processual struggles, which are by no means linear – for in Egypt in particular the revolutionary movement has experienced bitter backlashes. Supporters of a social revolution had not really believed that they could achieve political impact. But they experienced how, as a movement of the masses, they challenged the government of the country. The extremely empowering moment was followed by repression. The activists had to pick up their dead comrades and learned that they had little influence on the course of the revolution.

Currently, Egypt is again stuck in a military dictatorship, in which there are almost no open spaces for change and exchange. In Egypt's history, the Muslim Party (Muslim Brotherhood) has been repeatedly elected as the governing party and the gap between the religious and secular state has been a central conflict of a post-colonial society since 1920. On the other hand, there is the question of cooperation or non-cooperation with a Western neoliberal and neo-colonial economic system. Open, free spaces would be needed to counteract the polarizations experienced by Egyptian society and to be able to enter into a joint struggle for a future society. However, these spaces have been almost completely destroyed by the military dictator Sisi, who uses repression against any resistant voices. Arrests, torture and assembly bans are – besides high poverty rates – paralyzing everyday life in the country. Sarcasm is a strategy for many who were looking for change to deal with the present.

For many Egyptians, the Sudanese revolution is a source of hope that further changes in Egypt are possible.

## SUDAN

The revolution started in the workers' town of Atbara. The economic situation in the country is essential, because bread, gasoline and food are becoming unaffordable. The embargo of the USA influences the economic and political situation in Sudan, so that there are stronger economic relations with China and the Gulf States. At the same time, neoliberal exploitation by multinational corporations is taking place. Gold, for example, is a desired raw material that is mined by Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is also waging its war against Yemen with Sudanese soldiers. Saudi Arabia has profited from Sudan's corrupt military dictatorship and has a great interest in maintaining the status quo. Also the enforcement of the interests of France and the EU, such as migration



prevention through the agreement with Hemedti, who has received money from the EU for military means to secure the border, weakens the democracy movement, because Hemedti strikes with military equipment against the Sudanese civilian population. The dictatorship has therefore also been preserved by the EU. There are strong challenges for the revolutionary movement in view of the many interests of international actors and the economically unstable situation at home. Both the EU and Saudi Arabia profit from the instability in Sudan, because they benefit from the economic and personnel exploitation and the bought border guards. There is a war for resources in Sudan,

in which the Sudanese population is being exploited. But the civilian population has become aware of this and is rising up against the fact that their own wealth is being taken away from them. The trade union SPA recognizes the broad will of the Sudanese population for change and sets its priority as a political organizing element of the revolution. What is particularly noteworthy about the Sudanese social movement is indeed its breadth: In contrast to other places, a diverse exchange has already taken place here for several years in the so-called neighbourhood committees. This preparation is the strength of the heterogeneous movement of the whole country. The civilian population is demanding a civilian government that will organize elections within three years. This process is designed to last such a long time because the revolution is not seen as a single event, but as a process. At the same time, there are backlashes from bloody attacks by so-called Janjaweed, Islamist groups that are trying to keep the old regime in power.

## TUNISIA

In Tunisia there have been repeated uprisings since the sixties. In contrast to these, however, the protests of 2011 were organized from universities and mosques. The fact that in 2011 the electorate included 30% Islamists was a new phenomenon, which was also rejected by the majority of the population. In the meantime the dictatorship has indeed fallen and a negotiation of different parties and positions has become possible. However, social inequality

and a tense economic situation are still noticeable. A strong concept of the government, in which direction the country should move, is missing. Dependencies and agreements with the EU, especially with the European border regime, still exist. However, the cooperation with Frontex, the withdrawal and thus the direct pact of European deportation policy of the EU is being discussed and scandalized in the Tunisian population.

## ALGERIA

In Algeria, the message for 2019 is clear: a change of government must finally happen. The Algerians do not want Bouteflika in a fifth term of office. He is leaving because of strong pressure from the civilian population. Since no civilian government has been established since then, the protests continue and experience violent repression. A new narrative is gaining influence: a renewed struggle for liberation from current neo-colonial structures is necessary and the question of what a decolonization process might look like is being debated.

In Algeria, there are also clashes with radical Islamist parties, some of which have good financial means at their disposal. The ruling class uses Islamist groups and their weapons for its own purposes. The population saw through this game, learned from history and was able to keep Islamist groups away. However, the ruling elite ignores the demand for candidates and parties by the civilian population for free elections, which is why the mass protests continue.



*How do the movements in the different countries relate to each other?  
What strategies have been acquired in these struggles?  
How can these strategies be exchanged? How do signs of solidarity look like?*

In Chad, for example, groups are inspired by the organisation in Sudan, the trade union SPA exchanges forms of organisation with activists there. Activists in Egypt are also motivated by the Sudanese movement, but the composition of the civilian population is much more divided in Egypt.

Local movements also refer to each other transnationally. In Sudan and Egypt, the Algerian flag has been used as a sign of solidarity since the Algerian protests began. In Egypt and Algeria, protests have been taken up by the example of French activists Yellow Vests.

One strategy is to empower each other to keep on encouraging each other so as not to be discouraged by the repression. In the face of a lot of challenges, a great motivation for change can be felt at the same time. It is important to keep in mind the enormous strength of the civilian population when they form and defend open spaces within dictatorial regimes at the risk of their lives.

The Neighbourhood Organisation, organised among many other ways through Whatsapp groups, is a communication strategy that made it possible to remain within a repressive regime in exchange for another society and that made the Sudanese revolution possible.

The question of how European activists can show solidarity and support the social struggles is answered: protests can be organized in front of embassies in other countries, for example. Furthermore, it is important in Europe to take a stand against EU cooperation with dictatorships.

In all regions the demand for free spaces for exchange and discussion is clear. The will to fight for an open heterogeneous society is indeed there. At the same time, spaces in which a democratic society can be developed, experienced and lived are very rare. Experiencing freedom of expression is a process and takes time. Finding common ground among people of different socialisations, maintaining respect and enduring controversial discussions – all this takes time.

Political change must come “from below” and in this sense the workshop ends with the words

*“We need more spaces and time like in this workshop here, where we can exchange with each other. Change happens in processes and we need time for discussion. I think that we will make progress in this way!”*



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## Capitalism and Migration – why do we often fail to connect these topics into our regular explanations?

During the past years, we often felt unsatisfied, as we and others failed to include a graspable anti-capitalist critique into our struggles against the migration regime. Too many times, we found ourselves within a narrow line of argument, without embedding our analysis into its wider context. This has not been limited to our own struggles, but to struggles around migration as such: Still, human rights are mostly referred to as universal entitlements even though they are clearly rather an instrument of power, used wherever it feeds primarily the interest of certain actors. Still, the effects of capitalist-driven exploitation of humans and nature, the capitalist incentives of cultural,

economic and social competition and the destructive character of the globalized system of nation states often remain outside of critiques against the current migration regime. Of course, there are good reasons to exclude these points in certain moments, but nevertheless, we consider it vital to include the various forms of capitalist oppression that are inevitably linked to contemporary migration flows. Therefore, we decided to talk about this topic at the TSC in the ZAD in July 2019 in order to collect and exchange knowledge, practice and experience between all of us.

To make it clear from the beginning: We regard capitalism as an exploitative system that is based on inequality. Capitalism is rooted in the condition of ownership, which creates dependencies for some and privileges and wealth for others. The latter therefore dictates the conditions for the majority of the people. The power of the privileged class lies in this dependency. They strategically use their privileges to maintain and improve their superior position. They acquire property, they counteract economic equality by accumulating capital. In the present system, as we understand it, individuals, companies and states are acting according to this capitalistic logic.

### WHY DO WE CONSIDER THIS AS PROBLEMATIC?

Capitalism is, according to our view, one of the main reasons of ecological and human disaster. It is triggering war and desolidarizing humans. People are focused on the pursuit of their own profits. Based on the principle of competition, capitalism leads towards an individualist and egoist society. We are convinced that within this systemic framework, no peaceful coexistence can be possible. Different groups are constantly pitted against each other.

The character of competition doesn't only show off between individuals but also in a greater context – this is especially visible within migration, at the expense of the most marginalized groups. We regard migration as a historical phenomenon. One, however, that has been extremely influenced by capitalism. Today, the effects of capitalism are forcing many people to migrate. Effects such as war, economical inequalities, neo-colonial policies and much more. Therefore, we need a clear and structured anti-capitalist critique against the current migration-regime.

Capitalism depends on the structure of borders in order to maintain the global and unequal distribution of wealth. Therefore a lot of efforts / resources are put into the protection of these borders and the suppression of migration – for example FRONTEX or the European attempt to outsource the border regime deep into the African continent.

These are some reasons why we think it is important to embed migration struggles in an anti-capitalist context. Anti-capitalism means to fight against existing inequalities, to deconstruct privileges and to create common grounds to exchange at eye level. And it means to do so by radical means. We don't believe that the current system can or should be reformed. We are convinced that it needs to be overthrown.

Our goal was not to hold a lecture, but rather to use the opportunity of having united many different people with diverse backgrounds to collect insights and opinions about this topic.

During the workshop, we built groups according to different topics and tried to get a better picture about the different views in order to enable ourselves and others to better shape our arguments in the future.

### WE TALKED ABOUT THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

#### GLOBALIZATION

Globalization suggests openness and connectivity. However, there is a strong difference between the flow of money/capital and freedom of (human) movement. So, the promise of a globalized system is exclusively for some.

- How does Globalization as a term suggest or indicate openness and connectivity?
- Where can we see the difference between the flow of money/capital/resources/goods and the human freedom of movement?
- Where can these contradictions be made visible? What is the relevance of this paradox for migration struggles?

#### DEMOCRACY – exclusive character of democratic systems

“Laboratory of repression”: Democracy is often seen as the highest goal to achieve.

Still, the existing democracies reproduce and depend on the exclusion of people in order to exist.

- How can this be explained?
- How does the exclusive character of democracy work?
- Democracy is a specific form of governing and administrating people. Who is it for (and not), where is it from and what does it preserve?





### NEOCOLONIALISM

How are Neocolonialism, Capitalism & the actual migration regime interconnected? How can we make this interconnectedness visible in our theory and practice?

The European migration regime reproduces colonial relations, but its a new form of colonialism, it is not anymore just European nations/states invading and exploiting African (and all other) countries. There are new players like big companies from all around the globe and new political ruling classes. They all work towards an intercontinental colonialism, while the European border regime gets constantly strengthened and more repressive. Europe is protecting

its wealth while exploiting non-European states and criminalizing migration towards Europe. The precarious labour situation of migrants and increasing racism/right wing tendencies inside Europe are symptoms of this neocolonial reality.

### MIGRATION & PROFIT:

Many companies and individuals profit from migration in different ways. There are the big tech-companies, which work in the sector of surveillance and border protection. There is the defence and arms industry that increase their sale in many government's attempt better equip their military and police forces, to close down their borders and to violently prevent people from moving. On the other hand there are people and companies along the migration-route, who profit from people on the move and their often vulnerable condition. In addition, of course, there are different actors who profit from other effects of migrations, such as NGOs, medical companies, universities and many more. They all, in one way or another, economically profit from migration, especially from the attempt to prevent it. Projects such as the migrant files or organizations such as Migreurop contributed heavily to unveil important facts and many actors within this field. It would be of great value, if such research would be constantly be done by more than only the few actors currently involved and resistance against the profiteers would become dynamic again.

One example of how resistance could look like became widely visible during the TSC: the French movement of the Gilets Noirs. Marginalized and

exploited Sans-Papiers in France took the streets and occupied different symbolic places: the Airport "Charles de Gaulle", the headquarter of Elior, a big international catering-company, or the Pantheon, a French national symbol. In their analyses, they clearly targeted companies that profit from migration and forced them to publicly react. Such actions not only raise public awareness, but also creates pressure on the companies as they risk to lose their reputation. We hope to deepen our knowledge and exchange in that field on to equip ourselves and others with more capacities to act against the more and more rigid migration regime, to unveil where profits are made and who actually profits where within the complex chain of global migration.

### PATRIARCHY:

Patriarchy dominates our world. Everywhere at any time. Therefore, the fight against the current migration regime and the pursuit of anti-capitalist ideas has to be closely interlinked with the fight against patriarchy. On all levels of capitalist reality, patriarchal relations are defining who profits on what scale. However, feminist resistance grows all around the globe – in Kurdistan, as well as in Sudan or in Chile. It grows within the local communities, where women stand up for their rights, but also in Europe, where feminist strikes start to become a real threat for the economy and the people in power. But still, many women remain suppressed in patriarchal societies worldwide. Often, women have to leave a country because of patriarchal relations – with relatives or others. Often, they have to leave because of their political or social engagement. Often, they have to leave due to their brave actions against their own suppression.

While migrating, but also after having arrived at a new place, women are exposed to much more suppression than men. They often become victims of sexual abuse or are forced to sell their bodies in order to finance their way to a seemingly safe place. However, after having arrived, they still find themselves embedded in patriarchal structures, have often no possibility to follow their dreams, remain marginalized within their new reality. But there are many encouraging examples of resistant and self-organised women structures that counteract patriarchal relations, act outside of them, create safe and women-only spaces and show a reality of mutual aid and respect outside of capitalist and patriarchal mechanisms. We have to support these structures and projects by all means, have to create such spaces as well and have to work with different methods and approaches towards a non-patriarchal, anti-capitalist society.

## CommemorAction

Most of this article was first published in “5 years Alarm Phone” booklet, in autumn 2019. We added as a last part the outcomes of a meeting of the families of missing migrants, after the first collective Commemoration has taken place in Oujda, Morocco, from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2020. The meeting in Oujda became bigger than expected, when finally around 90 people from Morocco, including many sub-Saharan migrants met with families of the missing and activists from various countries to commemorate the victims of the massacre 6 years ago on the beach of Tarajal. On 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2014, more than 200 migrants tried to enter the city of Ceuta, a Spanish enclave, from Moroccan territory through the beach of Tarajal. The Spanish Guardia Civil fired smoke cartridges and rubber bullets at the people in the water to prevent them from entering Spanish territory. Fifteen migrants were killed on the Spanish side, dozens disappeared and others died on Moroccan territory. In Oujda in February we became active with public conferences, exhibitions and artistic performances, testimonies of survivors, a sit-in at the Moroccan-Algerian border and a “Commemoration Caravan” to the city of Saidia, in commemoration of all the dead and missing at sea and on the land borders. The gathering in Morocco was accompanied by actions in many cities in Africa and Europe. Alarme Phone Sahara was part of Commemoration with activities in Agadez in Niger, Bamako in Mali, Sokodé in Togo and in Edéa, Cameroon<sup>1</sup>.

The coming together in Oujda was one of the most fruitful ideas we had discussed in our workshop on commemoration during the Transborder Summercamp in le ZAD. In the following we document an article we had written for the 5 years Alarm Phone booklet, to summarize the various experiences we had shared in the Transbordercamp. A lot of these experiences came together again in Oujda in various testimonies – and we will meet again hopefully in Tunisia next year. For further appointments that have been made in Oujda, you can read the second part, which is a summary of the outcomes of the meetings with the families we had in Oujda.

Article about the experiences of the CommemorAction-workshop in the 5 years Alarm Phone booklet, October 2019

<sup>1</sup> <https://alarmphonesahara.info/en/news/57>



## COMMEMORATION

Many of us are confronted with death at Europe's external borders and elsewhere. We cannot forget those who have been killed or forcibly disappeared. To end this continuous dying is also one of the Alarm Phone's main motivations. During the Transborder Summer Camp in Nantes this year, individuals and groups with different backgrounds and experiences came together to turn our grief into collective action. In this short article, we document some of the contributions made during the workshop. Among the participants were relatives of the missing from Tunisia, those active in different Moroccan borderzones who try to identify the deceased, activists who maintain the platform "Missing at Borders"<sup>2</sup>, and several others who try to commemorate the victims of the European border in the Mediterranean Sea, the Evros region, Calais, and elsewhere. For us, commemorating the dead is a part of our daily struggles.

## PROCESSES OF IDENTIFICATION IN MOROCCO

**S.:** In Tangier, a lot of migrants and people lose their lives at sea. We who are there have no choice – we have to accompany these people. When the people die along the Moroccan coast, they are brought to Tangier. We have access to the morgue now, so I can help to identify people. The process of identification feels cynical – we can say we manage to move out bodies and make space for new bodies to come. We take pictures to see if someone can identify them. I go back to the migrant communities and ask around: what clothes were people wearing when they left, do they have particular marks like tattoos, do they have long hair like rasta? If someone thinks that they might know them, I ask them if they want to see the pictures. This is hard. When people are at sea for a long time, they are deformed, they have marks, injuries. So sometimes it is very difficult to tell if they were our friends.

Speaking to the relatives is the hardest. Sometimes when we call the parents and we speak with them, they hang up and stop speaking to you. It is hard for them to accept. When there is silence, you just have to wait and maybe call them back. They need their time.

Then the question is what to do with the body. If the relatives don't have money we can speak to the embassy or other friends – it is 3000-3500 Euros to send the body, so this is a lot of money. Sometimes we bury them in

<sup>2</sup> <https://missingattheborders.org/en/>



CommemorAction in Saidia/Morocco in February 2020

Morocco with the community if the relatives accept and sometimes they come and join. Sometimes relatives who can't come ask whether they can have something from the person, a tooth or the clothes, so that they can bury what belonged to the person at home.

## FAMILIES OF THE DISAPPEARED

**S.:** I came here from Tunisia to represent more than 500 mothers of missing children. Since April 2011 we are uncertain about what happened to our children. We have asked Tunisian authorities, but whenever we make demonstrations, the police meet us with brutality. They tell us that an investigation is going on, but there is no investigation. They told us that our children are dead, but they are not, they are missing. If they are dead, we want a proof and something to bury. They say that they will give us a death certificate, but we need a proof that they are dead. The European authorities have the power to force the Tunisian government into silence, and that is why they don't react. If something like this happened to a European child, the whole world would

stand behind the parents. But this is not the case for African parents. This is racism. I am asking everyone here to stand with us, to find the truth and find our kids. Why can Europeans travel just with ID-cards, when Africans with all their documents together can't travel?

### MISSING AT BORDERS/MILANO WITHOUT BORDERS

**E.:** In Milan, every first Thursday of the month we organise demonstrations, like the mothers of the disappeared in Argentina. People are forced by the state to disappear. People are forced into detention camps, where they are not able to speak to family and friends. The French invented disappearances at sea, when they killed Algerians, so there is a colonial dimension here too.

In Chile and Argentina, the mothers have a slogan: "our children were alive" – alive they left, alive we want them back. It is a political message. The families met between the movements in South America and Africa recently in Mexico and this has politicised them. It is important that families of disappeared get the chance to get to know each other.

It is also important for the families to see that there are people who care about their children, and try to make sure they are not forgotten. Whenever we talk about one person who has disappeared, there are also more victims behind; the families and friends. The platform "Missing at the border" publishes videos with testimonies from the families. We also propose to make a monument that these families can go to, to have a place to visit. Other Muslim families have a grave they can visit every Eid, but these families don't have anything like that.

### COMMEMORATING THE DEAD OF THE 6 FEBRUARY 2014 ATROCITIES IN CEUTA

**H.:** On 6 February 2016, we celebrated in Rabat in front of the embassy of Spain. We were over 600 activists. In 2018 we did a little action in Niger that connected to the launch of Alarm Phone Sahara. We connected to groups in Spain and in Ceuta and tried to work together with Moroccan associations for human rights and with the migrant council, migrant voices on the move and the trade union and we want to use the 6 February 2020 for a common action on commemoration. There will be a commemoration in Cameroon where many of the victims came from. There will also be an event in Ceuta as well as one in Rabat.

### MEMORIALS OF WELCOME TO EUROPE IN GREECE:

**M.:** In 2010, we did a tour from Germany to the Evros region in northern Greece where many try to cross the river. An Afghan woman had told us that she had seen her husband for the last time in the river and she asked us to search for him. We took his picture and went to all the small prisons but unfortunately we could not find him. The day she lost him, 14 people had lost their lives in this region. So we went to the biggest hospital to the area and spoke to the coroner who collects the DNA and clothes and files them. We were sent to police stations and there we found the ring that the Afghan man had worn on the day he went missing. In the area there was a cemetery that followed Muslim traditions and we were told the 14 people were buried there. What we found was not a cemetery but a mass grave where refugees had been thrown into for 10 years.

The next year we went back to the area, with other relatives who were missing their relatives, because it was so important for them to see the place where their loved ones disappeared. We had a small ceremony and created a memorial there, a fountain with signs of the names of the missing

The next years we started on Lesbos with memorials. We always work together with relatives of the missing. There is one in the north of Lesbos and another one near Mytilene. Last year fascists destroyed it, threw it in the sea, but this year we will again do a ceremony.

### DEATHS IN CALAIS

In the borderzone around Calais, sometimes we hear about deaths via relatives, friends or the media. We try to return the bodies if possible. There are also some associations that tried to visibilise death at the border the day after someone died and gathered in the centre of Calais. Some of these activists were arrested and there is also a strong police presence whenever we meet. We have a working group to coordinate for the legal and administrative procedures, as well as the psychological needs. We want to counter the invisibilisation of migrant death – 226 people died to cross from France to the UK. Now the border is extended into Belgium and increasingly militarised. So people are trying risky ways that are much longer, for example. they get onto trucks already in Brussels or elsewhere.



CommemorAction in Saida, Morocco in February 2020

## DEATHS AT SEA

Over the last years, we faced with Sea-Watch a situation where there are fewer rescue ships out there. Sometimes bodies are in the sea for days or weeks. Before, we could hand them over to larger boats, like MSF, to take the bodies to Europe so that the bodies could be identified. Now these larger boats are gone, and European authorities don't want to take the bodies. So we have to bury them at sea – we can't take them onto our boat, also in light of the lengthy stand offs when they don't allow us to disembark people. So we go to the bodies and try to find special marks, like tattoos, and take pictures so that others might be able to identify them. Then we try to find a way to have a ceremony on the boat.

## COMMEMORATION

During our workshop in Nantes, we began to develop ways of commemorating that are more collective and that connect to practices of protest. We created

the term “CommemorAction” as it contains a promise: We will not forget those who have lost their lives and we will fight against the borders that killed them. We will collectively build something from our grief. We will not be alone and we will not give up. We will carry on to struggle for the freedom of movement for all in our daily lives.

## COMMEMORATION IN OUJDA/MOROCCO

In February 2020 we gathered in Oujda, Morocco to come together at the 6 of February. To commemorate the victims of the murders at the border to Ceuta in 2014. And to come together with families from Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Cameroun and Mexico. Besides the various activities meetings among the families of deceased and missing migrants with victims of forcible disappearance and activists who support them took place to plan further steps. We document here a short briefing done by activists of the missingatborders-platform with outcomes of these meetings:

### **Briefing from the meeting among families of deceased and missing migrants with victims of forcible disappearance and the activists who support them.**

During “Commemora(c)tion” in Morocco, two meetings took place.

Participants to the first meeting were families from Tunisia, from Algeria, a representative of Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano M3 (Mid-America Migrants Movement) and activists from different networks, among which Alarm Phone, Missing at the borders, Afrique-europe-interact, Welcome to Europe, Asylum and Migration Tribunal, “Milano senza Frontiere” and “Porti Aperti-Permesso di soggiorno per tutti”.

Two issues were discussed during the first meeting:

1. The importance of holding another day of Commemora(c)tion,
2. The need to improve the data collection method regarding missing persons and their families: a single form holding all useful data, with which to populate a private-access data base, to better gauge the depth of this problem.

Participants to the second meeting were families from Tunisia, Algeria, Cameroon, Marocco, a representative of M3 and activists from the above-mentioned networks.

1. It was decided the next day of “Commemorazione” shall be held in Tunisia in 2021. Date and location are yet to be decided, but in April 2020 there should be a meeting in Tunisia where discussion about preparations should begin.
2. A decision was made to continue to reach out to families of migrants who are deceased, missing, and/or victims of forced disappearance, and are from other countries, to keep widening the network of relatives.
3. A decision was made to open the Marocco section of the website [www.missingattheborders.org](http://www.missingattheborders.org) specifically using information supplied by the families from Oujda, who lost their loved ones in 2002.
4. Following a request by the Algerian family members, a decision was made to mobilise to build a working group to develop a legal strategy that will bring court cases which would serve as precedent, and focus around the cases of migrants who are deceased, missing, or victims of forced disappearance. It is therefore necessary to create an International Legal Coalition that groups all cases, because international institutions do not consider individual experiences. In order to build this “legal working group”, each participating country is required to select legal representatives who will systematically advance this project. Regarding countries on the northern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, the network Milano senza Frontiere, out of Milan, Italy, will contact potential legal representatives. As things unfold, we will seek to build an alliance with those who are organising the next Asylum and Migration Tribunal in Bruxelles in 2021. The representative of Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano, speaking of the work being done from a legal aspect, has indicated that a meeting should take place in the coming months in Honduras, focusing on the juridical approach. Milano senza Frontiere will be tasked with contacting possible groups and individuals interested in the juridical strategy, with the following goals:
  - I. Organise a meeting in 2020 to assess progress in the work done specifically about this topic
  - II. Set up an opportunity for dialogue about this topic at the next “Commemorazione”, which will take place in Tunisia in 2021.

Photo on the right: CommemorAction in Lesvos/Greece in September 2019



## Transnational Networking

The composition of the Transborder Summer Camp covered the diversity of our movement and a great variety of groups and networks struggling for freedom of movement and equal rights for all. In the following list you find short presentations and links of all the transnational networks, which participated in Nantes in July 2019.

**Afrique-Europe-Interact** is a transnationally organised network founded at the end of 2009. It involves grassroots activists in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Togo, Guinea, Tunisia, Morocco, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands – among them numerous self-organised refugees, migrants and deportees. Afrique-Europe-Interact is active against the repressive EU migration policy – not only on the streets, but also through practical support on the routes, such as the Alarmphone Sahara or a shelter for women and their children in Rabat. At the same time, we are taking part in social struggles in various African countries. For example, we support the democracy movement in Togo politically and logistically. Or Mali: There we support small farmers in their fight against land-grabbing, and a small farmers' grassroots trade union has also been founded within our network. Afrique-Europe-Interact is active in Africa and Europe in equal measure.

[www.afrique-europe-interact.net](http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net)

**Alarme Phone Sahara (APS)** is a cooperation project between associations and individuals in the Sahel-Saharan region and Europe. The members of the Alarme Phone Sahara network are based in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo, Morocco, Germany and Austria. The office of APS is located in Agadez, Niger. There is also a network of whistleblowers in the region that works in collaboration with the Agadez office. Specifically, the APS pursues 4 objectives: a) Sensitize migrants and migration candidates not only to the conditions and dangers in the desert but to their rights as well. This sensitisation takes place in the places of origin, at bus stations and on the routes. b) Document what is actually happening on migration routes in the Sahel-Saharan zone, including crimes, human rights violations and road harassment. c) Rescue migrants in distress in the desert. d) Denounce regional, sub-regional, national and international anti migration policies.

[www.alarmphonesahara.info](http://www.alarmphonesahara.info)

**borderline-europe** was founded in 2007 with the objective to draw public attention to the violation of human rights by the increasingly restrictive European border and migration policies. We monitor, document and provide information on the EU's increasingly complex migration policies and their impacts in order to develop an active, political, and critical awareness within society. By means of civil disobedience, we counter racist structures and the deadly consequences of the EU's policy of isolation. We are based in Berlin, Palermo and Mytilini, are mostly volunteer-based and are advocating for the right to freedom of movement for everyone. We stand for the right to come, to stay and to go!

[www.borderline-europe.de](http://www.borderline-europe.de)

Since 2008, **Des Ponts Pas Des Murs (DPPDM)** has brought together about 20 human rights associations, international solidarity associations, migrant and exile support associations, as well as trade union organizations in one network, to analyse migration issues from the point of view of international solidarity. As a collective of citizen reception, DPPDM is also a space for the exchange of information and the initiation of collective mobilizations.

<https://crid.asso.fr/nos-actions/migrations/des-ponts-pas-des-murs/>

The **European Civic Forum (ECF)** is a transnational solidarity network. By focusing on self-organization and networking emancipatory initiatives, we hope to take small steps towards the utopia of a more just world. Some of our priorities in 2019. El Ejido/Spain: Strengthening of reception offices for migrants working in the production of above-ground vegetables in Andalusia – in cooperation with the agricultural workers' union SOC- SAT; Rabat/Morocco: We support the creation and operation of shelters for migrant women of sub-Saharan origin in Rabat, Morocco, by the ARCOM association; Riace/Southern Italy: Support and defence of the village in Calabria, which has been revived by the reception of refugees; Velika Kladuša/Bosnia: An international commission of inquiry was sent to make public the unsustainable conditions in the refugee camps on the Croatian border. In all countries where the European Civic Forum has offices, we are committed to welcoming and defending migrants. We are also involved in other struggles for biodiversity, peasant and climate struggles, transnational solidarity (Eastern Europe, Colombia, Mexico, ...) Archipelago: Every month, we publish a newspaper in two languages, German and French More information: <https://forumcivique.org>

**interPRISE collective (incl. [bla])** is a non-profit autonomous collective formed and maintained by volunteers involved in grassroots activist groups and networks across Europe that provides equipment and support for simultaneous interpretation in multilingual gatherings. We work with the principles of horizontal self-organisation, consensus decision making, as well as DoItYourself and open-source tools. It is our goal to support groups and initiatives that oppose political, social or cultural power structures. As a collective, we provide interpreters for various languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Spanish) and help coordinate the interpreting structure. Both collectives work together at the ZAD event to ensure that people can express themselves in a language they are comfortable in. It is important to us to help reduce domination and power systems linked to language!

**Mare Liberum** We are a Berlin based non-profit association founded in 2018 by a transnational collective of activists. We monitor human rights in the Aegean Sea, mainly off the coast of Lesbos and other Greek islands. In 2015 and 2016, the Aegean Sea became one of the hotspots of the various routes towards Europe. Human rights violations against refugees at sea – such as push-backs, pull-backs and violent misbehavior by official vessels – happened alarmingly often back then and are still happening today. Frontex continues to be present in the Aegean, supported by the Greek and Turkish coast guards and the military mission of the NATO. In the middle of this militarized climate, Mare Liberum operates as a civil eye and counter corrective to current European border politics. <https://mare-liberum.org/en/>

**Migreurop** is a European and African network of activists and researchers whose objective is to raise awareness of and fight against the widespread confinement of foreigners and the multiplication of camps, a mechanism at the heart of the European Union's outsourcing policy.

[www.migreurop.org](http://www.migreurop.org)

#### Missing at Borders

Every year, we find ourselves taking the terrible toll of lives lost in the Mediterranean. We talk about victims as numbers. Their individuality is completely erased and ignored. Thus, for the people dear to these migrants, the desperate conditions under which these families pay are not considered in public discourse. Missing at the borders is a web page prepared to give a voice to the families of migrants who have died, disappeared or been victims of enforced disappearances while trying to reach Europe.

<https://missingattheborders.org/en/>

#### pushbackmap.org

A tool to collectively fight the repressive EU border & control regime

The mapping project emerged from several groups and individuals documenting and counteracting push-backs and violence at the internal and external(ised) borders of the European Union. Although initiated by groups and individuals mainly active along the former Balkan corridor, this map is not limited geographically, because push-backs and border violence are a global phenomenon. The map is an inclusive and open tool for people targeted by, witnessing and counteracting push-backs in order to collect and centralise evidence. As the history of push-backs is also a history of resistance with successful legal challenges, activist struggles and relentless movements across borders, this map intends to document the continued struggle of people on the move and hopes to empower people to report experienced or witnessed push-backs. We thereby not only counteract and denounce push-backs and border violence, but also support the right to move freely and safely across borders in order to enjoy a life in dignity. <https://pushbackmap.org>

**Sea-Watch e.V.** is a non-profit organisation that conducts civil search and rescue operations off the coasts of Libya. It was born in 2014 from an initiative of volunteers who could no longer remain impassive and watch people die in the Mediterranean. We call for an international, institutionalised sea rescue with a clear mandate. Our organisation is mainly composed of committed volunteers from all over Europe who work on the implementation of Sea-Watch.

<https://sea-watch.org>

**Transnational Social Strike** see page 66/67

**WatchTheMed Alarm Phone** Since October 2014 we are running a 24/7 hotline for people in distress at sea. Until the end of 2019 we have worked on more than 3000 emergency cases in the whole Mediterranean. We are a network of about 200 activists who are situated in many cities throughout Europe, Turkey and North Africa. We connect our interventions in real-time with critical forms of documentation and public engagements in order to struggle against migration control. We engage in collaborations with local grassroots projects and migrant communities on both sides of the Mediterranean. We therefore understand our project as a concrete enactment of solidarity with refugees and migrants in transit, as part of what has come to be called the

trans border summer camp

migratory 'underground railroad' of flight and migration. We see ourselves as a transnational and multilingual node with varied connections to a growing network amongst those struggling for the freedom of movement and for a common and open Mediterranean space.

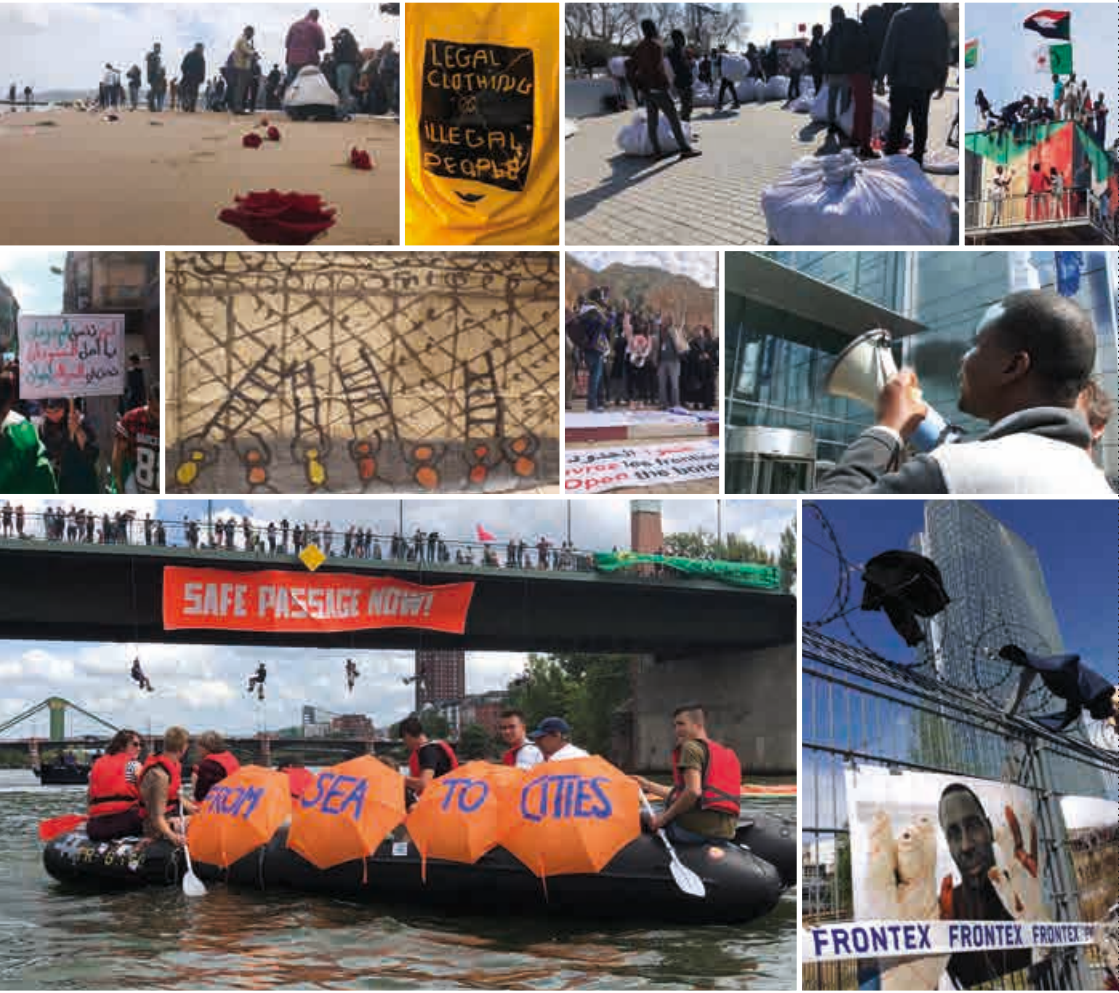
<https://alarmphone.org> and <http://www.watchthemed.net>

In the last two years, the **We'll Come United** network has gathered hundreds of antiracist groups and initiatives in two giant protest marches, featuring powerful speeches, elaborate parade floats and some fabulous music. Our marches have successfully brought together those who are fighting, and are often forced to fight, regimes of exclusion and deportation. Standing in solidarity with our fellow activists' and friends' hopes and struggles is what makes the foundation of We'll Come United. <https://www.welcome-united.org>

**Welcome to Europe (W2EU)** see page 20 - 27







[HTTPS://TRANS-BORDER.NET](https://trans-border.net)